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A Drama.

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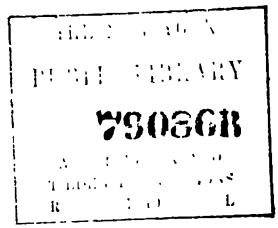
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THE MODERN HAGAR.

BOOK SECOND.

PART SECOND—CONTINUED.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Let what is broken so remain:
The gods are hard to reconcile."

THE gathering in the rotunda was soon broken. The yachting party accepted Mrs. Hartley's invitation to an informal dinner; so did Grandison and Horry.

Carson's refusal was a courteous but inflexible excuse. He was "to meet the Leszinkskys, who were coming from Philadelphia in the evening train, and go on with them to 'The Cedars.'" Roane also declined the dinner, but said he

Baltimore, who took her to Mississippi. She ran away, was insane or something, and Hartley repaid the Mississippian and freed her."

"Are you sure Hartley had sold her?"

"Yes; I was in Grandison's office when the woman came there with Dr. Carisbrooke, Leszinksky, and Horry. Hartley met them there."

"Stan never told me of that. He knew I would regard it as additional proof of Hartley's guilt—a fresh certificate of character. Why, Mrs. Leszinksky sold the woman to him that he might free her. She had his written promise to free her and her child—his child, the infernal hound! I am more than ever sorry I took my hands off his throat in Cincinnati."

"But about Bouie's Hill?"

"I feel morally sure he was the plotter of that villany."

"Carson, isn't that pure prejudice? What would he gain by that?"

"His wife would gain the Cartaret estate."

"She is the last woman in the world who would care for such gain."

"It is not a question of her, but of Hartley. I have no doubt of his guilt, nor of her truth and goodness. I know the Carisbrookes love her,

and I know that Stan esteems her highly; that he is sorry Rue cannot know her cousin more intimately. But his very estrangement from the Hartleys proves that he must believe ill of Hartley, although, to keep the peace, he meddled in my quarrel in Cincinnati and stopped a duel."

"I heard there was a difficulty, but I did not hear of any duel."

"If it had come to extremes I would have told you—would have called on you as a friend, for Leszinksky would have refused to be a second in a duel. Hartley affected high moral ground and would not fight. He was peaceful under insult; but I am not fool enough to believe that he forgets."

"How did it happen?"

"I had left Leszinksky at the Carisbrookes' and gone with my son to Oxford. Some package of my boy's was missing, and when I returned to Cincinnati I went to the Burnet to hunt up the luggage. In the hall I saw Hartley. He was standing in the door of one of the private rooms on Vine Street. I do not know just how it was—for I was conscious of neither thought nor action—but I had him by the throat, and I think most probably I should have for ever stopped

his breathing, when Leszinksky and Carisbrooke interfered. It was lucky for Hartley that it was Leszinksky. I would have made short work of it with any one else that had come between me and the scoundrel. But that one-armed old comrade! What could I do? I should have had to let go if it had been the devil himself I had by the throat. Not that the devil isn't a dashed sight better fellow than that mean whelp, whose dirty work and spotted little soul he must scorn."

"It did not end there?"

"Hartley would have been willing that it should. A crowd gathered — no matter how quiet or out of the way a place is, it's wonderful how quick a crowd will gather if there's a knock-down—but before we separated I said a few words that a coward would hardly fail to resent, and I made him understand I would wait to hear from him. I did wait—three whole days. Then I went to the Burnet House and waited, Leszinksky and Dr. Carisbrooke all the time trying to patch up the difficulty and urging that I was to blame, that I knew of no cause of quarrel. As if a man could not sometimes scent a cause in the very fact that hatred seems causeless. At last I promised Leszinksky that if I

could see Hartley I would say all I had to say in Dr. Carisbrooke's presence, and then, unless Hartley wished to fight, I would leave town. So it was settled."

"And you told him?"

"Of the affair at Bouie's Hill and my belief. Of course he protested his innocence. I told him I would insure the future in just one way: that if Rue died by any accident, any violence—no matter what that accident or violence might seem—I would kill him like a dog, if I had to search the world to find him. Since then I have felt easy about Rue. I do not think the scoundrel will hire more murderers for her while I live."

"What did he say afterward?"

"Nothing. He looked like a man in an ague when we left him."

"And Leszinksky—does he know?"

"He only knows that I accused Hartley of that attack and that Hartley pleaded not guilty. Neither Carisbrooke nor I told him of the way I took to insure Rue's life. But I can see that, in spite of his fear of being unjust, 'King Stan' distrusts Hartley yet. And there is another thing I suspect—Hartley has ill-treated his wife.

Dr. Carisbrooke hinted as much. He detests Hartley, but he has told Mrs. Carisbrooke nothing. He makes a sacrifice of his own feeling, and permits his wife and daughter to visit Mrs. Hartley. He told me that was at 'King Stan's' instance, adding that Kate's life was so unhappy that we must all think of her. You know how a woman's unhappiness would touch Leszinksky. Well, if you had known Mrs. Leszinksky—I mean Rue's mother — you would understand what his sympathy would be with her cousin's unhappiness."

Roane was silent; he asked no further question, but there was a flash of color across the sun-browned face that contrasted strangely with the frowning brow and the set look of the firm mouth. When Roane parted with Carson and the Leszinkskys, after promising to come to "The Cedars" with the Carisbrookes, he went to his rooms. An hour later he entered Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room. Dazzled by the light, charmed by the sound, he stopped in the doorway to listen to a fresh, sweet young voice which seemed to lead a chorus of whistling birds. The very air was vibrant with the melody of summer woods. Mrs. Carisbrooke motioned him to a

place beside her. Then he saw Molly at the piano playing an accompaniment to Miss Hilton's song:

"A robin whistled his dream to me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
He whistled and sang his dream to me—
Tra la la la!
Whistled and sang till the wild wood rang
With the echoing clang
Of his roundelay.

"A bluebell rang its sweet chime for me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
Tremblingly rang its sweet chime for me—
Tra la la la!
Tremblingly rang what the robin sang
In the carolling clang
Of his roundelay.

"A wild rose blushed and whispered to me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
Whispered and blushed its secret to me—
Tra la la la!
Whispered and blushed till the daisy flushed
And a zephyr hushed
At the roundelay.

"What was the secret the flowers told me—
Yesterday, yesterday?
The secret the bird whistled to me—
Tra la la la!

Flowers and bird? Oh! the wild wind heard
Every word, every word
Of that roundelay."

The mocking laugh of the wandering zephyr, the whistle of the robin, filled the room with fairy music. And when the singer turned to bow her acknowledgment of the enthusiastic plaudits Roane thought, "Titania's self could not have been more beautiful." Even Mrs. Carisbrooke's light touch of his arm seemed a rough awakening, a rude recall from the court of Oberon.

"You saw the Leszinkskys?"

"Yes; and promised to go with you and Miss Molly to 'The Cedars' next week."

Horry, standing near them, resumed a political argument which the song had interrupted. He appealed to Roane to settle a disputed point in the early history of the tariff. This appeal drew Roane and also Mrs. Carisbrooke, whose education and training had been solid and thorough, into the discussion. It was almost impossible for man or woman to avoid these vexed and vexing questions that week in Washington. The patriots and the wise statesmen—I fear there were but few of either—touched the fever pulse

of the nation with awe at its approaching dissolution. But their reticence was not copied by the general public.

The men with least brains were the loudest brawlers; and women who could not understandingly have emphasized the false prefatory sentence in the Declaration of Independence now ruffled their flounces at touch of each grave question, and referred to the Constitution as they expounded the rights and duties of States with the same easy, graceful, impertinent flippancy with which they would have discussed a character or given a critical summary of the last new novel.

Horry had found a foeman worthy of his steel in an enthusiastic disciple of the new Republican party, which had swept the North in the elections of '54 and '55, and which now presented a solid front to a divided Democracy. From opposite points of view the foemen were both bitter revolutionists.

Horry. "The tariff of '33 was a Machiavelian compromise to which the North never intended to adhere. This was proved in '42 when duties on manufactures were advanced. Since then the fiscal system of the nation has been persis-

tently protective, which is an unjust discrimination against the agricultural States, whose productions are the basis of all foreign commerce. The Union is an incubus upon the West and the South. It is time it was broken. For one I am glad we are about to bury the foul corpse."

Republican. "And I, for different reasons, am glad to 'let the Union slide'; I agree with Banks there. I am ready for extremes. Dissolve the Union, bring on civil war—you can neither foil nor intimidate us; our purpose is as fixed as the eternal pillars of heaven. Three-quarters of a century hence, if the South retains slavery, she will be to the North what Poland is to Russia, Cuba to Spain, and Ireland to England."

Horry. "The glittering phrases of abolition prophecy are philanthropical bank-bills which are discounted by the utterers. Plain common sense is hard cash; it has a fixed value and is always current. The North imported the negro, grew rich from the slave-trade, and then got rid of its unprofitable property without loss. It has never offered the South emancipation with compensation. Try that."

Republican. "The idea is preposterous, the

suggestion criminal. What! feed the curs of slavery to make them rich at our expense?"

Horry. "They enriched you."

Republican. "They have disgraced us until we blush to confess we are Americans. The Union is a concession on the part of the North. We, through a sentimental weakness, have tolerated the South in the Union which they now threaten. Let them break that Union. We lose nothing, they will lose everything. The association with, the protection of, the North has been their palladium. We will gladly withdraw our protection. But they are only talking like braggarts; they could not be kicked out of the Union."

Roane. "If your party wins you will find that they will go; and the North will resist their going. Yankee reasoning is a thing of the ledger; its philanthropy is put on and off with its Sunday clothes, but the account-book is carried in the week-day pocket. Extremists may drive us to leave, but the same extremists will try to prevent our leaving. The cohorts of Pharaoh will follow us to bring us back into Egypt. But there is the Red Sea."

And he pointed to the Potomac. His impressive manner commanded attention and silence.

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Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What has South Carolina to do with me? I am an Ohioan."

Roane. "Before that a Virginian?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "No; I transferred myself and Virginia transferred the land. Carisbrooke is thoroughly de-stated and rein-stated. We are Ohioans. And now we have a Northern son-in-law. You may yet see your red-headed friend heading a column to cross your Red Sea."

Horry. "Possibly. We recognize the fact that a man's first duty is to his State."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I recognize the fact that the times are out of joint. O cursed spite, there's not a man alive can set 'em right!—at least honest men cannot and the politicians will not. The wise men are all dead, and Wisdom goes a-mourning in petticoats."

Horry. "She has Folly in the same dress to keep her in countenance. I heard her to-day talking like Bellona."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; there are a few asses who do not wear the regulation dress. But Molly comes with 'Beauty' to say 'good-night.'"

Molly was going with the yachting party for the next day's expedition to Mount Vernon.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is—Love forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust:
Love in a palace is perhaps at last
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast—
That is a doubtful tale from fairy land,
Hard for the non-elect to understand."

WHEN Molly returned from Mount Vernon Miss Hilton came with her and Mrs. Cartaret. Before the Carisbrookes left Washington Mai Hilton was a recognized relative of the Hartleys. The Hartleys' handsome young kinsman had also taken an assured place in the family. The old money-gatherer, from whom Captain Hartley had inherited millions, had left his sister's grandson three hundred thousand dollars, to which were attached two conditions: he would forfeit the inheritance if he married a wife whose fortune did not equal his own or if he remained unmarried at thirty-five years of age. The forfeited estate would then revert to Simon Hartley's heirs-at-law, Mrs. Cartaret and her brother. This con-

tingent bequest was the only one the old man made to Mrs. Cartaret. He had given her shelter after George Hilton's death, but she had been so unfortunate in that marriage that he resented her misfortune as a personal injury. By covert hints and sneering allusions to faults through which she had suffered he had made her dependent position intolerable.

The marriage with Judge Cartaret had changed all that. It was in every respect a desirable alliance. It reinstated his niece in the opinion of the millionaire, as it did in the good things of this world. It gave her honors, dignities, and troops of friends. It would also have given her a large share in the fortune of her now proudly-attached uncle but for his sudden death—a death that insured Hartley the inheritance. For the only will that could be found was the will Simon Hartley had made the week after the news came of that disaster at sea and while his niece was still the widow of George Hilton.

Mrs. Cartaret was a woman of fierce temper and many faults, but she was capable of the most intense and devoted attachments. She had married George Hilton in the face of her uncle's threats and her brother's remonstrance. She

had clung to him through disgrace, and after his death had loyally defended his memory. Neither uncle nor brother, although both were given to sneer and taunt, had ever dared utter unveiled condemnation of the dead. Even implied reproach to her grief had been met with stormy outbreaks of indignant resentment.

She had always been devoted to her brother. They were left orphans at an early age, and she was the elder. But her attachment to her brother had a hard wrench that Christmas at Oakhill when the news of Tom Cartaret's death was so maladroitly told to Judge Cartaret. From that moment she was tortured by suspicions which she vainly tried to banish. Her affection for Kate grew stronger, and would have been developed into an antagonism to her brother but for the hold he had upon her through her affection for the child that she had adopted as a relative.

Mai's beauty and helplessness had first attracted Mrs. Cartaret. Lucy's unmerited suffering had brought the child near to her in her pity for its mother. She had tried to trace Lucy after her disappearance, and then learned the story of the sale of the woman in Baltimore. Mrs. Carta-

ret had seen the trader who bought Lucy, and heard of her suffering on the route to New Orleans, of her illness and her long stay in the hospital, of her recovery from that illness, which left her a harmless monomaniac—claiming all suffering children as her own (her child was ill when it was taken from her) and nursing them with tireless devotion—of her sale to a planter near Vicksburg, and her sudden disappearance. Further than that all trace was lost.

Mrs. Cartaret, believing that Lucy had drowned herself (she was last seen standing on the river bank), redoubled her care for the child through pity for the dead mother.

Hartley had grown more openly considerate of his daughter because of his belief that her mother was dead. Not that he had ever thought to pity her mother; he simply regarded her as an obstruction, now happily removed.

The surname Mrs. Cartaret had given Mai and her appearance freed the child from apparent taint of mixed blood. Mrs. Cartaret's ward, as George Hilton's cousin, was alone in the world. The world only seeks or acknowledges a relationship when it is profitable or creditable. And this name was stained by disgrace. Besides, the

child had no fortune. She was only Mrs. Cartaret's ward and pensioner.

To one guilty soul she was a constant threat and a constant promise. Her father really loved Mai; she was the first human being he had ever really loved. He had had a selfish liking for his sister; she had always smoothed the difficult places for him as far as she could. Careless of her own interests, after George Hilton's death she had never forgotten her brother's; she had concealed from her uncle, at cost to herself, her brother's shortcomings. She had stinted herself out of the very moderate income the old miser gave her, to assist her brother. The old man was watchful and suspicious; he observed all her expenditures, and when she could not, or would not, explain this default in her income he explained it to himself in a manner not creditable to her. And to shield her brother she endured unjust and harsh judgment. But she did not bear it patiently, and that impatience counted against her and for her brother.

In Captain Hartley's rare visits uncle and nephew had neither time nor occasion for difference. The old man's family pride and feeling, so potent against his niece, were engaged in Cap-

tain Hartley's behalf. And then, thanks to his sister's timely aid, the nephew never asked or hinted any need of money. In fact, he had once refused a proffered loan; that refusal had much to do with making him his uncle's heir. His sister asked too often. And since George Hilton's death her uncle could not understand such requests. They were complied with, but in a reduced measure. The sum asked for was rarely given, but caution against extravagance was not withheld; in that the miser was prodigal. And so Mrs. Cartaret secured the Hartley fortune for her brother.

To go back to Hartley and his daughter. His love for her was daily growing stronger. It was not yet sufficiently unselfish to be purifying, but it made him cautious. He resolved to risk nothing in the future. Carson was an argument, and a weighty one, in the affair of the Cartaret estate, but Mai was also in his mind. To risk himself was to risk Mai's interest, and that he would not risk. He was selfish for his child, and through that he put restraint on revenge and cupidity and was prudent. Prudence made him fearful. In the pursuit of the plan that had so long led him into

transfer to him all future right of inheritance through the Cartarets he would be fully paid. The deed of transfer was made and signed after Kate insisted to the lawyers and the notary who came to witness the signature that she understood fully the entire transaction and had received full value for all she signed away.

Never having counted the chances of Rue's inheritance or of her own succession to Colonel Tom Cartaret's estate, Kate did not know that she had relinquished to Captain Hartley a possible ownership of "The Cedars."

The arrangement of all these matters had dragged through the ten years since Judge Cartaret's death.

Hartley had very reluctantly agreed to accept the payment his wife offered, and his sister firmly believed, and convinced Kate of her belief, that he had behaved very generously, and had finally accepted the transfer in order that Belleview and the negroes might be secured beyond cavil to Kate, as her father's will had provided.

In the early spring the deed of transfer was signed. From the first moment there had been mention made of this manner of settling the in-

debtedness of her father's estate to Captain Hartley, Kate was anxious and insistent to have it done. Knowing that her father's will had so placed his estate that Hartley could have no present or future interest in it, she feared the long-standing debt would embarrass her at every turn. And when, some six weeks after the deed of transfer had been signed, the Supreme Court decided the "Cartaret will case" in favor of Judge Cartaret's heirs, Kate was delighted at her release from money obligation to the man whose name she bore—the man to whom, from a forced sense of duty, she paid a certain outward respect, although every additional year convinced her, with fresh reason, of the impossibility of any real reconciliation that would bring about their reunion. Kate's isolation, the absence of those homely but sweet domestic ties which are so much in the daily count of happiness, the vacancy in the life where affection was not (her tolerant regard for Mrs. Cartaret was scarcely an affection), had left her in that collapse of personal interest, that absence of ballast, in her own life which so surely drives a weak woman downward.

But Kate was in no sense weak; her faults had

... that shut out love
... —an ally which
... like the idle caprices
... any period the life
... been impossible to
... pity, nor untruth-
... which make
... even more
... the coquette was
... Lesnitsky. She
... that intangible
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... the perfume of
... She would
... in the face
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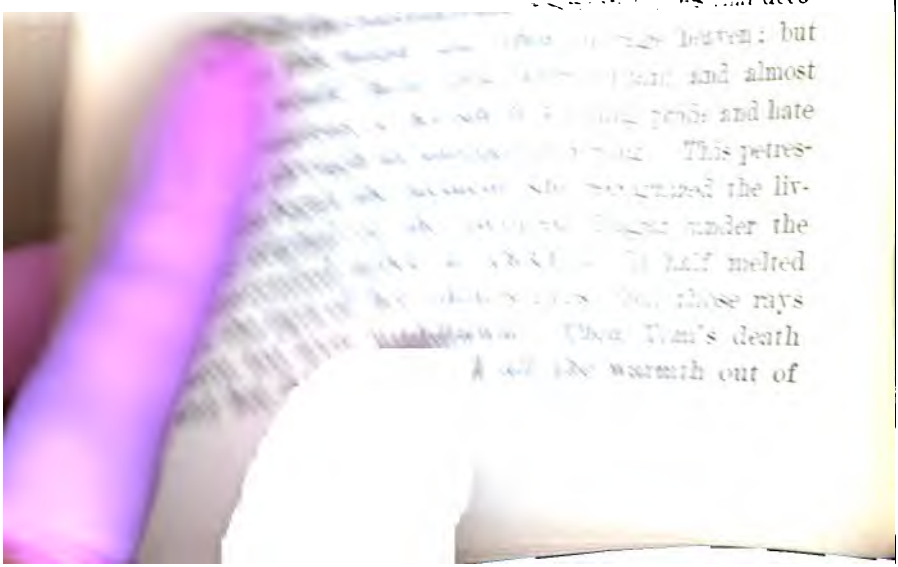

life. But the warmth came again at the touch of a wounded bird.

The lowliest messenger, if he so touches the heart that it throbs in its casing of clay with a divine pity for the suffering of any earth-born creature, has brought the promethean fire which proves him a messenger of the gods.

A new life commenced for Kate from that day. Yet the sacred fire was but a spark, and even with the kindling of the spark came a new danger. Kate had loved so little, now she might love too much. And she did love Leszinksky with that perfect, trustful love which is instantly and unwittingly given. She was no more conscious of wrong or ashamed in the revelation of this feeling to him than a child would have been ashamed of the expression of its preference. She had kissed his hand as a devotee might kiss the hand of a saint. It was love born of reverence, and both love and reverence were strangely new guests in this great heart which had so grand a capacity for loving.

The loyal and open expression of each thought and feeling as it was born into consciousness was witness of Kate's truth and of her purity. Recognizing her love, giving it full expression, yet

saying that because of that she dare not accept Leszinksky's offered protection, was, in an inverse sense, the noblest expression of that perfect love which casteth out fear. Neither was there the shyness of any shame in her silence afterward. It was simply that she had said all, that she accepted nothing. She had neither hope nor thought of his loving her. He might give her the same pitying, protecting care he had given the wounded bird. He would do his best for her, she was sure of that—his best because of her need and because of her cousin Margaret. Then she thought of the wife who had taken her cousin's place. Could there be such capacity for loving in the heart that one might love twice? Yet in all her thought of him at that time there was absolutely no thought of herself.

But later, after she had known Rue—and with what joy she always remembered that she and Rue were instantly friends, as well as kinswomen, when they met at the Carisbrookes'—Rue had talked to her of her mother, but had avoided mention of her stepmother's name. Then Kate did think of herself. She thought of the wife who had given up all to marry him, and she thought of the delight of such sacrifice. Through

that Kate learned the danger of her thought. Then she resolved to keep love so pure that she would not blush to tell it to men and angels. After the parting with these newly-found relatives the spark kindled into flame, and its warmth went from the woman's heart into her life. She put her love into the visible form of human sympathy.

There was no outward show or observance of good works, but day by day the shadowy rounds of the ladder were being lifted heavenward.

As I said, Kate put her love in her daily life. She also put duty there. Yet under all was a subordinate thought that strengthened and comforted her. She would never speak her love again to him, but some time, in the future outside of time and the bonds of the flesh, she would tell it all to Margaret. Margaret would understand.

But, in one of those occult mysteries of sense and feeling that only a woman or a man with the feminine intuition of a poet could understand, the very love and sense of duty which ruled her life, and not only influenced but led her to sacrifice, ruled Hartley out of the sphere of her own personality. She had forgiven him, but of

necessity it must always be a barren forgiveness. The marriage-tie was eternally broken. Kate would make any worldly sacrifice for the man who had been her husband. In fact, she would have courted such sacrifice. She would have endured anything for his good—anything except his presence in her life as her husband. That she could not endure. The narrowness of the circle that bound them to the same house made this feeling more intense.

Their divorce was all the more complete because human law had never pronounced it. And because of the entirety of this divorce Kate grew considerate of Hartley's happiness.

Her meeting with Mai was so purely unexpected that she would probably have failed in the law she had made unto herself but for the eyes so like her child's. That likeness brought a burst of feeling. If she had known she was about to meet Hagar's child—in her thought she always called Lucy "Hagar"—it would have been different. She would have been kind and courteous, she would have made the child welcome, for the child's sake, for its father's happiness, and as some compensation for the wrong she believed she had brought upon Lucy. But now Mai

would always be personally dear to her. Kate could never go back of that first greeting. She would now always see in Mai the sister of her child.

Yet this brought her no nearer Mai's father. If anything it was another infinitesimal wedge of separation.

All that summer vacation the girl was with the Hartleys. They left Washington for Oakhill—after a short visit which Kate made to Belleview—as soon as that long, heated session closed. Mai and Bradnor were not so much guests as members of the household on the Hudson.

Kate was trying to settle old scores with her conscience in her devotion to Mai's good. She soon understood Hartley's views as to Bradnor, and as much as she dared, although she hated match-making, she furthered his wish.

The girl's childlike expression of her liking for the handsome kinsman made this easy for Kate. The summer passed uneventfully at Oakhill.

Mai went back to school in the fall, and Bradnor had not spoken. The girl seemed content. Kate could see Hartley's disappointment. Then she puzzled herself in a vain effort to understand whether Bradnor did not care for the girl, or were prudently waiting until the time should be more fit.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Others shall right the wrong—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win."

SELECTIONS FROM A BUNDLE OF OLD LETTERS.

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to the Doctor, July* 5, 1860.)

"YOU will be surprised, O supreme chief! that your womenkind are still at 'The Cedars.'

"Steenie was quite ill on Monday. That delay and 'King Stan's' persuasion induced me to telegraph a change of date and an order for our letters to our waiting landlord at the White Sulphur.

"The letters were promptly forwarded. So I have your Chicago musings. I am still angry at your throwing us over to go there.

"Molly has her present from her Uncle Robert. Did you know of the gift? A check for five thousand dollars on the Bank of Virginia —an over-generous sum for the purpose. It is rather too much to spend in wedding raiment

when a girl marries a penniless 'sojer-man.' But Molly is the child of her father, and so my lovely Lady Prudence decided to spend one thousand, and with the balance make a first payment on the Avondale place which she has just bought from Horry. It is the corner near us, with the three walnut-trees, and Horry has been very generous in the matter. You know they have for a long time jestingly talked of her intended purchase. As soon as she opened Robert's letter, check in hand, she turned to Horry, and the bargain was concluded and the first payment made. So your daughter is châtelaine of 'The Walnuts.'

"Talking of châtelaines, I have a queer bit of news to tell. The mistress of Belleview came from Washington to her 'seat on the Chickahominy' to dispense gifts and justice before going to Oakhill for the summer. We learned that fact through her neighbors, the Shirleys. They dined here on the 1st and brought Miss Anne Esmond's excuses. She and her brother Harry were staying with Mrs. Hartley, who was alone at Belleview. It was embarrassing news for 'King Stan.'

"With all his dislike or disapproval of Hart-

ley—I do not suppose 'King Stan' could dislike even any thing so little human as Hartley—he could not be discourteous to his daughter's cousin. After much private pow-wowing with our admirable prospective son-in-law, and after a grave consultation with Colonel Roane—who I could see out of the corner of my eye was an advocate of a peace-and-propriety arrangement—peace and propriety won the day.

"On Tuesday Molly and I drove over to Belleview with her high mightiness the 'Princess of the Cedars.' Horry was our escort. Neither Leszinksky nor Carson would put foot where it could be construed as a visit of courtesy to Hartley, and something kept Roane away. I cannot just tell whether it was dislike or over-liking. Of course you will frown at this, but I think he does admire Kate and would give scant measure of mourning if Hartley should go to his fathers. You see I interlard my news with gossip.

"A twelve-mile morning drive in old colonial style—a coach drawn by four thoroughbreds—over Virginian roads and across the rough logs that bridge Virginian gullies, so tortured my back and enraged my nerves that I gladly accepted Kate's invitation to sleep at Belleview, especially as I

was to be paid for my complaisance—to my spine. My stay insured Kate's acceptance of Rue's invitation to visit 'The Cedars.'

"What a puzzle Rue is! She can be, and is, the sweetest and simplest of girls; but the maiden of seventeen can just as readily freeze into the haughtiest *grande dame* of the Leszinksky line. What a queen she would have made for Poland if she had lived a century sooner!

"Warsaw would have worshipped her as a goddess. I have never seen her on one of those famous Cartaret thoroughbreds, which she rides so well and fearlessly, without thinking how she would look at the head of the Polish legion. If the Bonaparte had known Rue, if she had been born the daughter and not the great-granddaughter of old King Stanislaus, in spite of the Mohammedan mother the king-maker would have established a modern Semiramis in the Polish capital.

"What a pity it is that people slip out of the century to which they are akin! If Rue had not fallen, in the chrysalis state, out of the niche in which she belonged, she might have been a Polish empress and conqueror of the Cossacks.

"But to go back to our visit to Belleview:

"The Shirleys were ill-informed in one particular: Kate had not come alone to the classic banks of the Chickahominy. She had brought 'Beauty' with her. The Beauty you did not see, because you failed to come to Washington. You will not tell me all you know, but I am sure 'Beauty' is Captain Hartley's daughter—his and Lucy's. She has Hartley's eyes, and there is something of Lucy too. I never made out all the likeness until I saw the Hoyts at church last Sunday.

"You are very wise and very close-mouthed, my master; but I am neither blind nor stupid. I can see some little distance into a millstone when it is translucent.

"So Lucy's father was Hoyt, the gambler. I remember perfectly what he was like. You have heard me tell the story of Grandmamma Archer's English horses—how they got frightened one day in Richmond at a boy's kite, and, turning suddenly, threw the driver from his seat and ran away with the carriage full of us children. Well, that man Hoyt, the gambler, was the man who risked his life to save us. He caught the horses and held to them, although they lifted him from the ground and carried him nearly half a square.

I saw it all. I leaned out of the window to see —leaned so far that I fell out just as he did stop them.

"I have never forgotten Hoyt. Twice after that rescue he was out at grandmamma's. To tell you the truth, I think I was in love with him before I knew you. He must have been my first love. I was only twelve years old when he was killed. But I did not know Lucy was his child until I saw the Hoyts last Sunday—I mean the gambler's brother's children. One of them resembled my first love, and 'Beauty' resembles that very one. Suddenly Lucy's *Sunday name*—the one I had never heard, but the one I had seen on her free papers, which I am happy to tell you I did examine—flashed into my memory, and flashed a very clear light into one of those mysteries you have made such a pother about.

"It would have economized time and trouble if you had told me several things, and it would also have saved the wear and tear of mental study and painstaking detective construction.

"Take warning, my dear. It is better to trust me. I will keep close what you confide; but I will use my own discretion about my discoveries. There are two or three more points that are cost-

ing me thought, though there are others that I have already unravelled.

"The truth is, a man never does know how to keep a secret; he is a very ostrich in his manner of hiding—that is, if any one is tracking him. I know a man can hold his tongue. You have remarkable power of restraint in that. But, being a man, you do not know the thousand ways in which a secret is involuntarily told.

"Now that my conscience is relieved, and you have had your shortcomings shown you, I will get back to my story.

"Rue was delighted to visit her cousin Kate, and charmed with the warm welcome she got. There *is* something in the tie of blood, for the proud lady and the haughty young princess gushed into warmest friendship.

"Then the ride and my spine were up for discussion; and the arrangement was all complete for that day's stay and Kate's coming to 'The Cedars' with me the next day, together with the 'young friend,' name not mentioned, who had come with her from Washington, and the Esmonds'. But just then the entrance of the Esmonds with that 'young friend' stopped the gush and petrified the princess.

"Rue did courteously unbend to the Esmonds, but she was royally icy to 'Beauty.' Kate's look of appeal melted her somewhat, and the proper invitations were properly given to her Philadelphia school-mate, *Miss Hilton.* Miss Hilton was glad to accept—too glad! She is more a *Hartley* than a *Hoyt.* My gambler would have thrown such an invitation at the head of the giver.

"But Miss Hilton accepted. Miss Hilton is here at 'The Cedars'; and so is my Kate.

"And my Kate—my Kate! O Carisbrooke, what a gossip you will say I am! But I do wish Captain Hartley was removed to paradise, which I am sure is a better wish than he deserves and a finer place than he will ever see. But I will stop just here. You have secrets. My only secrets are my thoughts and my discoveries. They are my mysteries.

"But I will tell you how we kept the glorious Fourth at 'The Cedars.' Think of it—it may be the last we shall ever keep in Virginia.

"For, O Carisbrooke! this secession fever is spreading and spreading. People have taken it that we would have thought fever-proof. The Shirleys and the Esmonds are rabid. Roane

is in the crisis of the delirium. Horry is a sympathizing Northern assistant helping his very utmost to inoculate the Virginians. And oh! and oh! 'King Stan' has the disease. He has it so mildly that there is method in his madness. He judges the North fairly—which is more than the rabid can do—and he deplores the factious spirit which is rending the nation in twain. Because he is just and honest, and calm and truthful, he is more to be feared as a power that will roll Virginia secessionward than a cohort of these breezy orators, who, I pray heaven, talk more than they will ever fight.

"But we have one little bit of comfort in 'Red-head'—he is loyal to the Union.

"The sachem from the Illinois, though he says but little, says that little well.

"It is strange for Carson to take sides against Leszinksky. I said as much to him. And I think better of him for his frank explanation. He told me that in the beginning of the talk of secession he was inclined to take sides with the South; that, being a Democrat, his conviction was in favor of the right of secession; but that 'King Stan' had urged upon him his duty to his State. And so our beloved son-in-law, through

the wisdom of States-rightsism, will stay with his section.

"A little because of the obstinacy of women, and just a little to try a patriotic missionary enterprise, I proposed an old-fashioned spread-eagle celebration of the Fourth of July, that it might be at least a remembrance for the future.

"Roane and Horry gave cynical assent; Leszinksky a very cordial but very solemn consent. Red-head was enthusiastic. He had the flag up at daybreak, and, thinking it something uncommon, all the uninvited neighbors came as lookers-on.

"Leszinksky read the Declaration of Independence. Carson made a very manly and sensible speech, which Roane was gracious enough to characterize as 'a model of soldierly common sense and good taste.' Mai sang the 'Star-Spangled Banner' as I never have heard it sung and never shall hear it sung again by any one but her, unless United States patriotism is practised in paradise.

"Kate, and Molly, and Anne Esmond, and I cried like simpletons.

"Rue's eyes shone like stars, and her cheeks

and lips were scarlet. How martial music must have stirred the blood of those old Leszinkskys!

"'King Stan' was very pale. But 'Red-head'? Why, 'Red-head' nearly split his throat with wild 'hurrahs.' And Horry, and Roane, and Harry Esmond, and all the multitude applauded to the echo.

"I do not like Miss Hilton over-much. But I wipe out the dislike from this day. She has one great gift: she is one of earth's rarest singers.

"To-morrow Kate goes back to Belleview. The next day they start to Washington, and then to Oakhill. They have promised to visit us at Christmas. We all leave for the White Sulphur next week. Steenie is much better. I trust the mountain-air will give her strength. I am devoted to the lovely child, and so is Rue. Molly spoils her; and, for that matter, so do all. I expect a letter to meet me at the White Sulphur."

("*From Miss Hilton at Belleview, July* 17, *to Miss Rachel Pyle at Philadelphia.*)

"My *darling, precious* Miss Pyle: I have had *such a delightful* time since I last wrote you! Cousin Julia sent your *dear, sweet letter* here to me. But as you wished *me* to write you a regu-

lar *journal of my vacation*, I *must* go back to the week of our visit to *Mount Vernon*, where I saw the tomb that contains the *honored* and *revered* remains of the *greatest and best man* that ever deigned to *protect* and *bless our country*. After standing in *silent awe* before that *altar* of *patriotism* I came back to Washington with Cousin Julia, and Molly Carisbrooke, and the *elegant* Mr. Bradnor. We were all invited to make a visit to Captain Hartley, and Mrs. Hartley *insisted* on *my* going with them to their *place on the Hudson* for the summer, which I *gladly* consented to do. I knew Madame Detontville would be *very willing* to let me go for the *whole vacation*, as she is paid by the year for *me*, and also for the Manapanes, who are orphans like *myself*. Last year she was only *too pleased* when Cecelia Manapane was invited to stay with that *queer old uncle* who lives at Kennett.

"But for my *journal*. I described to you as well as *words could* Molly Carisbrooke's poky, red-headed lover. When I saw him *kiss* her in that *brazen public* manner I thought I *should* go through the floor. It *is* such a strange match for an only daughter; and Cousin Julia says the Carisbrookes *sont très riches et bien comme il faut*.

"They are to be married some time next winter. Mrs. Hartley is going to Cincinnati to visit the Carisbrookes *Christmas;* they have also invited *me*, and I have promised to go. I suppose the wedding will be a *grand* affair. Cousin Julia will arrange to get leave for me from Madame Detontville to go to Cincinnati *Christmas*, and also for the *wedding*. If it was not that I might not afterwards be asked to the *wedding* I would rather stay in *Washington* Christmas with Cousin Julia. She has to stay to *receive;* and Washington is *so nice*, and the Hartleys live in *splendid* style. Don't you think it *very queer* I have never been invited to them before, when *Captain Hartley* is my guardian? Cousin Julia has explained to me that *she* did not like to take charge of *my affairs*. I know there must have been *something wrong* about *her husband*. She asked me never to speak of *him* here, or of the *Hiltons!* But I mean to find out what I can. If there is any *disgrace* it will not hurt *me*. *Her husband* was only a distant relation of *my father's*. She told me that. But she will not tell me anything of *my mother's family*, except that she was a Spaniard my father married in Cuba, and

that I was born in Cuba. I have asked her all I *could*, but there must be *some mystery*, she is *so* anxious to change the subject. But she did ask me about my early recollection. I told her, of *course*, what I remembered about being at *sea* when I was a tiny little thing, and all about the *sisters in Montreal.* I wonder if that sea-trip was *when I came from Cuba?* But it seems to me I remember a *great river*, and a *beautiful garden*, and a *grapery* before that, and people; but I did not tell Cousin Julia all *that.* Sometimes it seems to me that I remember Cousin Julia in the garden. I *do* remember another woman, *who was my nurse.* When that woman *Lucy* came to me—when the scarlet fever broke out at Madame Detontville's—I thought *she* reminded me of my old nurse. She came twice afterward when I was ill. *You* were not with madame then. The last time was in the vacation. I had been walking all day in the sun, and I fainted on *Chestnut Street.* There was *only* Cecelia Manapane and one of the little children with me. It had happened that Lucy saw me fall; I do not know why *she* was on Chestnut Street. I was ill and delirious a long time. I can scarcely remember anything, but I

do remember seeing Cousin Julia, and also *Captain Hartley*, I do not know how often. But Lucy was *always there;* and so I got her mixed up *more than ever* with my old nurse. The week I came to *myself* two or three of the girls had come back. *Rue Leszinksky* had been back some time. That was before her stepmother died, and then she *did not go home;* she had been to the sea-shore with one of the teachers. Well, she is *very fond* of Lucy. *Just like her* —proud as a peacock to *white people*, and *great friends* with a colored *woman*. She *did* help Lucy take care of *me;* and I would have been *thankful* but for what she said to me that *spoilt it all*. It was one day when I was sitting up, and *Lucy* said I had been up too long. I would not go to bed, just to show her *her* place. I was tired of her and *indignant* at her presumption. I knew she had been kissing my *hands*, and *even my face*, when I was ill. I suppose I *did* sit up too long, for I *nearly* fainted, and Rue helped Lucy put me in bed. Rue went after some cologne or something, and Lucy commenced to kiss me, calling me her '*own precious child*.' I asked her then if she had not been my nurse when I was a baby. But she shook all over, and

began crying out: 'My child! My own child! Don't you know I am your *mother*, *your own mother?*' Then I told her to go away and never come near me again; that she was telling a *wicked lie;* that I would rather be ill and *die* than have a *negro* for a *mother.* I pushed her away, when she kept on begging me to remember her. I was *really angry then*, and I suppose I *did* call her a *wicked woman* and several other things. She ran away, and I never saw her again. But just think of *Rue Leszinksky taking it up* and telling *me* that I was an *ungrateful, despicable creature;* that I knew Lucy was a harmless woman, who had lost her only child; that Lucy *could* not be my mother, for I was not '*true or faithful* enough to be the *child of so good a woman.*' I have never liked the *nasty, proud thing* since. But you *will* be surprised to hear that I *have* visited her. Mrs. Hartley brought me here to her old home—'*The Belleview Estate*' it is called. *You* would be shocked here every day, for we are waited on by *slaves;* though I must say I like them better than I do *Northern colored people*, they are so *respectful* and *attentive.* And you know *you* say you would never have colored ser-

vants *in the North*, that they are too *impudent* and worthless. But if you did not think *slavery* such a *sin* I am sure *you would like* such a maid as Mrs. Hartley's Rose—so much better than that *Irish creature* who complained to madame that you took so much of her time waiting on *you*, and that you were so *difficult to please*. I suppose the principle *is* wrong, but I have an excellent girl to wait on me and dress me, and it is very nice. There are two hundred slaves on this place. It is Mrs. Hartley's own property, and they *seem* very happy and very fond of their mistress. But probably *you* would say it was all *fear*. Rue Leszinksky owns *five hundred*. Is it not a *terrible sin* for her to hold so many *human beings in bondage?* I would not be in her place for *the world!* A *slave-owner!* I am sure *you* did not know what a *wretched, sinful thing she is*. She came over to Belleview in a *coach* and *four* with *two outriders*. Mr. Harry Esmond and Miss Esmond, who are what the slaves call 'quality,' were staying here with Mrs. Hartley. Mr. Harry Esmond met *us* on the cars. We got off at the same station, and Mrs. Hartley asked him to bring his sister, as we were alone at Belleview. You know I am *not vain*, but it was easy to see

that Mr. Harry Esmond was *not displeased* with the invitation. They *had an engagement* at 'The Cedars,' the *Leszinkskys' place*, and *broke it* to come to *us*. As I told you, Rue Leszinksky came to invite *us* to 'The Cedars.' And *then* the Esmonds went. I would not have gone to her house, but I *did* want to see how they *lived*. How shocked you would be! Why, the place is fairly *covered* with slaves. And just *think* what *airs* she gives herself! Some of the people who were visiting there called her *the* PRINCESS! Oh! I know what you will say when I tell you they are *secessionists!* I am so glad you think the slaves will soon be freed! And if they *do* have to kill their owners, who *can* blame them? I am sure *you* are *just right* in your feeling about *slavery*, and that poor, *dear*, *good* John Brown *was* a martyr. It would make any one *abhor slavery* to see that *stuck-up thing* on her plantation. And, with all her *haughty ways*, she is on *perfectly familiar* terms with these *common negroes*. No wonder she wanted *me* to listen to the insane raving of that wretched, crazy colored woman; she would be glad if it was all true. Why, she *actually calls a mulatto Mammy Sara!* 'The Cedars' is a larger house than

Belleview, but it is *horribly* furnished—old *trumpery stuff* a hundred years old, and that foolish girl seemed *proud of it.* I heard her tell Colonel Roane that some of the shackling, black old tables, and *secretaires*, and queer odds and ends were brought over by the *first Cartaret* that came from *England.* Rich as *they are*, to keep *such trash!* How mean! The dining-room is rather better. Mrs. Carisbrooke says it is a *perfect picture* of an old baronial hall. But the furniture is old *black oak*, with the most *horrid* carvings of *bears* and *things*—enough to give one frightful dreams to go in it when the big *light-wood knots* are blazing in the hearth and the *horrid things all seem alive.* Just think of burning *light-wood* in July evenings *because it happened to rain!* And Rue said she was '*glad of the excuse* to do *away with candles* when the *woods were full of pine-knots.*' *Princess, indeed!* A miser I should say.

"They *have* very pretty horses, and *Colonel Roane* gave me a lesson every morning and evening of the three days we were there. Colonel Roane is a *member of Congress.* He was *very nice* to me. And so was *Mr. Harry Esmond.* I ride *now* at Belleview with the *Esmonds* and sometimes Mrs. Hartley.

"How did you keep the Fourth of July? We had a *perfectly splendid* time at 'The Cedars.' I sang the 'Star-Spangled Banner' *most effectively*. I am glad *now* that madame always *insisted* on my practising for those *horrid concerts*. I know I *do* sing well. Signor Solfeggio always said I caught the *exact expression* as *he gave it me*. And the poor man *did* take great pains. What a *stupid* he was to let madame catch him on his knees *that day!* As I assured *you* at the time, *I* was not *at all* to blame. Of *course* I was *polite* to him. But I always tried not to *seem to understand* his nonsense; for I knew he gave me more *time* and made my lessons *easy* by the *pains he took*. And I had *so* much rather sing with a *master* than to practise *alone*. There was something to sing *for* when he went *mad* over my voice, as he used to do, poor *fool!* I never *had* a greater success than on the Fourth. I did not miss a point of acting or an expression Solfeggio had taught me. I think he would have given his *eyes* to have heard me. Music is the only thing I ever *have* cared to learn. I am sure if Captain Hartley had not arranged for *you* to room with me and help me in my studies I would never have got through with my classes. How

good you have been to get those *horrid 'ologies* in my poor *head*, and, best of all, to teach me to read *poetry* and put some *expression* in it. *That* is what poor Solfeggio did with my singing. I wonder if madame *would* let him come again and give me lessons if *you* would stay in the room? *Will you try to persuade her?* She knows Captain Hartley trusts *you*, and that he has arranged for you to go to *Europe* with me when I have finished in *Philadelphia*. Now, *dear* Miss Pyle, *won't you* get old Solfeggio back? *Do!* That's a *dear*, *lovely*, *sweet* Mentor. You know you call yourself my Mentor. Please, my *darling* Mentor, I want to sing as well as Lind or Sontag; and the signor said I *could* in time.

"We go to Washington to-morrow. I will *beg to stop* and see you a day in Philadelphia as we go through.

"Your own *loving*, *devoted*

"MAI HILTON."

(*White Sulphur Springs*, *August* 17, 1860. *Roane to Horry.*)

"MY DEAR HORRY: I perfectly agree with your statement—let me quote it: 'The union of the States was in no sense a constitutional revo-

lution or a proclamation of a new civil polity; it was, in fact, a mere *Bund* for the general convenience of the States and had no mission apart from them. The value of the federal Constitution was simply in the adjustment of the relations of the States, by which they became a harmonious whole in their foreign polity. The practical idea of the federal Union, which left to the States the exclusive guardianship of their domestic affairs, was a perfect recognition of the States as creators of the federal government, which was only the creature to whom certain powers were delegated for the convenience of international and inter-State relations.'

"I repeat, while believing this, I believe that our present national difficulty has in reality but small foundation in the much-argued question of State-rights. It is something more serious —something which is already past all chance of peaceful adjudication.

"In truth, sectional animosity has already divided the country into two distinct nations, and slavery furnishes a convenient cause of rupture. It is slavery which is the prominent distinction between the North and the South, therefore it has been urged as a subject of controversy. As the

occasion of discord it has become so conspicuous and feeling is so violent that careless thinkers mistake the occasion for the cause. It has the great advantage of being a specious plea for the North with the outside world; and it will probably win to that section the sympathy of lovers of freedom, though in reality the slavery agitation is not the offspring of philanthropy but of jealousy.

"Nothing has ever been more falsely attacked nor more unscrupulously misrepresented than the system of servitude in the South. It is the mildest system of obligatory labor the world has ever known. To the African it is not slavery in the sense of debasement. It has elevated the negro. It has lifted him from barbarism into the only civilization for which he is fitted—a subordinate place, it is true, but a place where he is protected in life and limb and where certain personal rights are recognized, and which gives him a safety and security unknown to the negro race in Africa.

"So much for slavery as an actual fact. As a pretext in our national division it is an admirable cause of quarrel. Yet slavery is but the excuse. The true difference is in the personal qualities of

the different stock from which the two sections have sprung.

"The quarrel of the North and the South is but a new phase of the old fight between the Puritan and the Cavalier—a dangerous revival of ancestral feuds which originated in political and religious difference.

"African slave-traders, who were assuredly not Southerners, made a feudal system possible in the plantations and colonies of the South in the eighteenth century. That system was founded and perpetuated, and is now sustained, by a landed gentry who in a great measure control the nation.

"The South has been the dominant power since the Revolution, but it has not been an aggressive power. It has, on the contrary, threatened nothing to the North. It has enriched the North with its products. It has ruled the country for sixty years and there is no stain upon its honor. But all this has provoked the jealousy of the thrifty tradespeople, who are busy with their gains during the week and intolerant bigots in their Sunday conventicles. Unfit for legislators, they are envious foes of Southern statesmanship. Their innate conviction of inferiority

adds to their hatred. Should they once get into power the Saturnalia of fraud and corruption will begin, and will end only with that last terrible protest against excess—an absolute ruler. The conservatism of the South—a conservatism due to its great landed interests—has been the guardian of the republic.

"Your suggestive letter provoked all this, so that letter must be my excuse.

"To drop argument for results—and in fact all argument is now too late—I have lost all hope in the elections. The vague platitudes of the Bell and Everett platform are capturing the timid remnant of the Whigs, and also some fearful souls out of, or in, the Democratic ranks. But this could have done no harm had not our Solomons cut the Democracy in twain.

"Mr. Lincoln will come in and we needs must go. His inauguration will be the declaration, on the part of the North, of a geographical severance of ties.

"The clause in the Chicago platform on the Dred Scott decision is the handwriting upon the wall. Judicial authority is to be squelched and we are left to take 'Hobson's choice.' It is to be submission to abolitionism or nothing.

"For me I prefer—nothing; so I have commenced my preparations for the future. I shall sell my property in the North, and I have written to my overseer to put grain this fall in every acre of arable land on my plantation. Next year there will be fighting men to feed.

"I do not share the general delusion of my people; I know the North will fight. Those cursed Puritans fought well with Cromwell; and here—with such a heavenly pious pretext—they will put their persons in peril for their pocket's sake.

"Moreover, the war will be no child's play, nor will it end speedily unless we carry the war into Africa. And that I am afraid we will not do. The very State-rights doctrine that honest men like you so sturdily believe in will forbid that.

"The fight will be here in Virginia.

"I had a long talk to-day with Colonel Robert Lee, a man who, I fancy, will be our future leader—a greater than Washington, because he is Washington without the faults of the irascible '*Pater*.'

"Lee and Leszinksky are old friends. They are much together here, and are much alike in

character. They have a favorite seat under the rustling leaves of a purple ash; and when I can get away from the noisy declamation of our battle-hungry politicians I find my way to the shade that shelters the two soldiers. Listening to the sad reflections and grave apprehensions of these patriotic and peace-wishing warriors, I shut my eyes and dream that the summer wind is blowing from the Ionian Isles, while two of Plutarch's worthies are talking of a threatening oracle from Delphos and preparing for a sacrifice which may appease the wrath of the gods.

"The noisy politicians will only talk. The burden and heat of the day that is coming will fall most heavily on such men as Lee and Leszinksky.

"Carson is still here, and his days are full of softer cares. I am glad to tell you that Mrs. Carisbrooke has fully taken him into favor. His time of probation is shortened, and I hear from Miss Rue that we are all likely to meet in Cincinnati in the first week of the coming year for a wedding. It is well that Carson is busy love-making. Discussion is intrenching him more strongly in his opinions; from being the mildest he is growing to be the most intense of Union-

ists. He has had a few word-passages, which I feared might lead to a passage-at-arms, with one or two of our hot-blooded, unreasoning Hotspurs, who are so near-sighted and color-blind that they see only the side of the shield that is turned their way, and refuse belief to any other.

"Miss Molly is fully occupied smoothing the ruffled plumes of her gallant knight. But she does keep him in order. What a perfect wife she will make!

"Once in a while my teeth are set on edge with envy of some fellow's luck who may be more deserving, but who certainly is no more appreciative of the (half) divine sex than I.

"'The Princess' walks in maiden meditation, fancy free. Her adoration for her father has had one excellent effect. Her standard is a good one, and she is not in danger from any of these coxcombs who flutter about her fortune. I often wonder what fate is reserving for her. She, too, is of the Plutarchian type. In one thing she is all wrong—she is spoiling that dainty little half-sister with over-much devotion. One counts sacrifice nothing, and the other will, I fear, as she grows older take it as nothing.

"If you have time and inclination, write me what further signs you may see in the times.

"I will be here until the last of September, and then we break our party to meet again at the Carisbrooke wedding. In November I will be in Arkansas. Letters addressed to Little Rock will always follow and find me. All here regret that you would leave us when we left 'The Cedars.' You should have come with us."

(*Leszinksky to Carson from "The Cedars," January* 1, 1861.)

"Rue and I have both written to the Carisbrookes accepting their invitation for the 7th.

"I am particularly glad, my dear Carson, that we will be together several days before your marriage.

"Our long friendship has been so much to me that I look anxiously for a renewal of old ties of confidence and comradeship before the new ties are formed that will necessarily in some measure set aside the past. Not that I think the past will be forgotten or that our tried affection will grow cold—that would be impossible to either of us—but I foresee in the future a separation of hopes and interests that may keep us apart for

years, which will be a hard trial to a friendship like ours; not a trial in the sense of loss of regard, but a trial in the sense of sorrow because of our separation.

"The long-threatening storm is no longer at a distance. It is upon us. Danger is now a live thing with which we have to grapple.

"When the telegraph announced the election of Mr. Lincoln I knew the danger—which a brave man may fear because it menaces his home and his country—was near. The call of the Legislature of South Carolina for a convention, the meeting of that convention in Columbia on the 17th of last month, the adjournment to Charleston, and the passage on the 20th of the ordinance of secession were rapid steps on the onward march.

"Major Anderson's evacuation of Fort Moultrie, after spiking the guns and burning the gun-carriages, together with the removal to and the occupation of Fort Sumter, is a virtual assumption of hostility on the part of the federal government. An armed threat to a sovereign State is of itself, as I understand the federal Union, the inauguration of civil war, which is the most frightful of national calamities. And, as if to

make a way out of difficulty impossible, the North receives the intelligence of the momentous change in the sentiment of our people with sneers and derision, and of the warlike attitude of the government with acclaim and congratulation. Yet the congratulations prove how hypocritical are the sneers.

"Northern newspapers scoff at South Carolina 'chivalry.' The pictorial papers are filled with slanderous and derisive caricatures. The South is called 'a spoilt child.' A really great preacher, in a partisan and un-Christlike spirit, exclaims, 'Let the prodigal go!'

"'Mr. Greeley, who is certainly an authoritative mouthpiece of his party, says in the *Tribune*, that 'if the cotton States are satisfied they can do better out of the Union than in it we insist on letting them go in peace. The right to secede exists, and we do not see how one party can have a right to do what another party has a right to prevent. We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to the residue by bayonets. If ever seven or eight States send agents to Washington to say, "We want to go out of the Union," we shall feel constrained by our devotion to human liberty to

say, "Let them go!" And we do not see how we could take the other side without coming in direct conflict with the rights of man.'

"Thus South Carolina is invited and sneered into secession at the very moment that an armed force is set threateningly in the harbor of her chief city.

"It seems that the North is anxious to precipitate disunion. At least it is taking great pains to provide South Carolina with cause and reason for secession. The Abolition papers are evidently fearful that result will not be attained, and they honestly proclaim their fears and their purposes. But the self-called Unionists disclaim an intended interference with slavery at the moment they adopt a bold move toward Federal centralization, supported by an armed force which threatens to subvert the rights of a State.

"The sorrowful attitude of the people of Virginia, who deplore the rending asunder of the Union, is also a matter of amusement and derision to the North. In one breath we are described as 'cowardly pacificators caring only for federal patronage and federal offices,' and in the next we are called 'braggarts and bullies,' who

'talk valiantly for the South, but who will desert it in the moment of need.'

"I cannot believe that all Northern writers are so utterly ignorant of the temper and history of our people; consequently I must believe they are working understandingly to bring about a result they desire.

"Yet, despite the misrepresentation and vilification, Virginia will not secede as long as there is the slightest and most feeble hope of reconciliation, or even of adjustment looking to peaceable separation. When hope is gone she will cast her fortune with the advocates of the rights of the States; and the most peace-loving and Union-loving of her children will fight more fearlessly in her cause because of her spirit of justice and moderation. She will have done her best for peace and unity before taking up arms, and she will be a rampart of defence to the South in the desperate struggle which will ensue.

"It is certain that Virginia will be the battle-ground. Her central position, her nearness to the Capital, will force it as a military necessity.

"You know what will then be my duty and what is my resolve. I had given up the profession of arms. If we ever can judge ourselves

fairly—if I know myself—my only ambition as a soldier was to do my duty and, wherever it was in my power, to spare and to save life. If I had felt that I was growing eager for success for selfish reason—avaricious of glory—I should have known that it was my duty, and I would have left the army at once. For we should not only pray not to be led, but we should instantly get out of the way of temptation.

"But I felt the army was a good school of discipline for me, and I was of use there to my fellow-soldiers. I resigned only from conviction of the necessity I was under to devote the remnant of my life to a higher duty. My children, both motherless daughters, needed me and needed a home.

"I shall never again draw sword from scabbard, except in defence of Virginia.

"The first duty of every American citizen is to his State.

"It is to the federal Union only when that represents his State.

"I have the common debt of all patriots to pay, and I have a more particular obligation. I was one of Virginia's pupils in the military school which she, in common with all the States,

established and supported. As a representative of her bounty I had the training, the education which prepares a soldier for the profession of arms. In addition to the common debt of patriotism I owe a personal debt. Virginia gave me place in the federal Union which her sons and her treasure had so largely contributed to create, and also the profession of arms in the Military Academy which her tribute, in revenue paid to the federal government, assisted to support.

"But, my dear Carson, you owe the same debt to Illinois. The heaviness of a great sorrow comes over me when I think of the parting of comrades who have been to each other the truest and most devoted of brothers.

"Your goddaughter has never asked me but one question about the chances of the future, although I know she is keenly alive to the change that has come and the change that is coming. Her question, only yesterday, was: 'Papa, will the old regiment go with the North? Will all of them be against us?' I do not know which of us was sorest at heart when I said, 'Yes.'

"I write this that it may not be necessary to

tell it in words when we meet. We will hold to our friendship, Carson, and be silent as to the inevitable. I know you will go with Illinois, and I know Illinois will go with the North. Mr. Douglas's influence will be as potent to hold, and will be as potently used to hold, the State in the Union as Mr. Lincoln's would be.

"The Democratic alliance with the South has been only an alliance of parties. It will now side with its section and its interests in its section.

"But come what may, old comrade, we will love one another. I trust you will keep to our old compact and be the guardian of my daughters. My will is made, and all arranged so that the date may be on record and nothing may be urged as to our antagonistic position at the time when it may come into effect.

"Rue's faults are generous faults, and she will be amenable to your rule through love to me as well as to you. But my great fear for her is that she may sacrifice her own life and happiness in some hot-tempered outburst of sympathetic defence of another, or in some passionate tempest of enthusiasm or gratitude. I am glad I owe no debt of friendship or favor to any one I could not trust my darling to love.

"Steenie is so sweet and gentle and attractive that I fear we are spoiling her. Rue is devoted to her, and we know what Rue's devotion means.

"I beg of you, Carson, do not let Margaret's child sacrifice herself even for her sister. I tell you frankly that is the danger I most fear.

"I have sometimes hoped Rue and Roane would care for each other. That is rather badly put, for they do care for each other; but their mutual regard is too openly and too frankly expressed to promise the fulfilment of my hope—which is a mere thought with me, but one you will understand. With love to the Carisbrookes from us all—and as that includes you, why you and Miss Molly must take the largest share—

"Always your comrade and brother,

"STANISLAUS LESZINKSKY."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"The bridegroom may forget his bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou has done for me."

ON the 4th of January the Leszinkskys arrived in Washington on their way to Cincinnati. Roane was to accompany them, and one day's stay in Washington had been arranged for his convenience. But he met them at Willard's with two excellent reasons for postponing his departure until the 10th; he would then arrive in Cincinnati one day before the wedding. *Excuse No.* 1: A delegation had arrived during the holidays from Arkansas, and were in daily conference with their senators and representatives as to the action of Arkansas in the secession movement. *Excuse No.* 2 was more personal. Captain Hartley, whose political position brought him into rather close relation with

Roane in committee-rooms and caucus meetings, had asked Roane to escort Mrs. Hartley and Miss Hilton to Cincinnati. They could not leave until the 10th. Mrs. Hartley had to preside at a grand political dinner and reception, where the delicate threads of political webs were to be skilfully set to catch the timid. Every house in Washington that winter was a focal point for some large or little intrigue, and Hartley's was the centre around which revolved the Northern sympathizers with secession.

Kate was a Virginian of the Virginians, which expressed at that time the utmost intensity of Unionism yet left in the State-rights school. In good truth, every Virginian then in Washington from the old Dominion (and they were there in shoals: merchants, professional men, planters, and idlers—I give the ascending grade of rank) walked Pennsylvania Avenue with the confident mien of one who, knowing he is born to greatness, is waiting to have it thrust upon him.

There was a plethora of embryo Washingtons, Jeffersons, Patrick Henrys, and Randolphs in the Capitol City equally ready to be "Fathers of the Country"; authors of new resolutions framing "the mode and measure of redress";

orators proudly threatening, "If this be treason make the most of it"; duelists coolly selecting a location for the inevitable bullet; or debaters stabbing an antagonist with the point of a stinging sarcasm. That they were not already winged and fully feathered was the misfortune of the country. But their "sheathèd thoughts" were unheard, and after weeks of patient waiting and unremunerative effort they disappeared from lobbies and avenues, and sank into silence with the "mute, inglorious Miltons and Hampdens" of their respective counties.

Poor fellows! The embryos missed greatness, but they died heroes, dropping one by one upon those bloody battle-fields of Virginia. Recognized too late! Why did they not cry, as they filed past that unfinished monument to the first and greatest of American rebels, *Morituri te salutamus!*

. . . . . .

Dr. Carisbrooke and Carson were waiting on the platform of the Hamilton and Dayton Railroad station for the coming of the eight o'clock train, now some minutes overdue. There was the hoarse scream of an engine at Brighton, followed by the rumbling thunder of heavy wheels

on an iron track, and with short, angry puffs and a red glare in its cyclopean eye the belated locomotive rolled heavily into the station at Cincinnati.

It was a clear, cold, frosty evening. The street-lamps flickered in little, waving tongues of flame, which sent their quivering red rays against the window-panes of the station and into the shadowy angles of the houses on the opposite side of the way.

In the distance stretched lengths and cross-lengths of lights which traversed the city and climbed the encircling hills.

Overhead the multitudinous stars shone through the soft radiance of the mystic twilight which lingers over cities when skies are stormless, from the setting until the rising of the sun; while below the curving river reflected the glittering chain, the tongues of flame and the radiant stars.

Doctor Carisbrooke took charge of Rue and Steenie, Mammy Sara and Oscar were packed in a hackney coach with the numerous packages of the travellers, while Carson and Leszinksky drove on rapidly in the light buggy with the fast trotter which Carson had driven over from the

garrison at Newport, where he was now stationed.

There had been a silent but more than usually cordial greeting between the two friends. The silence was unbroken, except by some casual question and reply as to change in the route and the streets, until they commenced the ascent of Vine Street hill.

Carson checked the rapid gait of his horse as he said: "I had not time to answer your letter, Stan, and, although you do not seem to think so, words are better and easier of understanding when we are face to face. I perfectly comprehend your position and your feeling. In your place I should be governed by the decision of Virginia. I hope to God Virginia will do nothing that will separate us! I don't care a damn for the cotton States, and I would be glad if they were out. If New England would go too, as her States have threatened to do from time to time, it would be a blessed riddance to the West and to the Middle States. But I am in the army, and I certainly will not resign just as those Carolina game-cocks begin to crow. If I was in Anderson's place I would send over a few shells and make it hot for them."

"I do not think you would, Carson. You would know, as Anderson does, that the State is a powder-magazine. A shell thrown with hostile intent into Charleston would blow up the Union."

"Have you any hope of its existence?"

"Not much. But in a good cause the faintest hope is worth cherishing. Unfortunately, men's passions are so inflamed they will not listen to reason. I am very glad Anderson is in the place of danger. He is an excellent soldier, and as a man he is moderate, modest, and just. If any federal officer can maintain peaceful relations with Charleston he will. I am only fearful of the orders he may receive from Washington. I regretted his change from Moultrie to Fort Sumter; but then I cannot judge for him—no one could who was not in his position. Fortunately, he is popular with the Charleston people, and they will not forget that Mrs. Anderson is a Southerner. Family relationships are exceedingly influential in a crisis like this. If you were going to Sumter to spend your honeymoon I would feel confident that you would be a very gallant and courteous enemy to the Charlestonians. Miss Molly would capture them as a charming woman and as a Carisbrooke."

"Doctor Carisbrooke is a Unionist."

"Yes, I grant he is in principle. But he belongs to one of the old Virginian families. I think he will find that he loves Virginia dearly when war has desolated her green fields and quiet homes. From Mrs. Carisbrooke's letters I infer, although she does not absolutely admit it in words, that her feeling for Virginia is likely to outweigh her attachment to the federal idea."

"Do you think it only an idea, Stan?"

"An idea is a great thing; sometimes it is a great truth. Ideas make and undo treaties, states, and peoples. Because of ideas came the truism that the poet, 'the ballad-maker, is greater than the law-maker.' One deals with ideas, the other with facts. And because facts are stubborn things they excite and beget stubbornness. Ideas capture through their suavity. Feeling may conquer ideas; facts rarely do. I think feeling is conquering Mrs. Carisbrooke."

"The cursed ill-temper and spite of her Northern neighbors is doing it. She was an excellent Unionist last summer in Virginia."

Leszinksky laughed as he answered: "For your sake, Carson, I will try my best to persuade her to make us a winter visit. I assure

you she will hear very few kind things said of the North. Virginian women are not Griseldas. The patient quality in their patriotism is soon exhausted. Personal bitterness is intense now, and it is growing fierce and aggressive. There is the pity of it! Friendship, affections, even family relationships, will hardly survive the wrench that is coming."

He held out his hand to Carson, who caught it in a mighty grasp—the clasp one might take if two shipwrecked friends were going down together in a stormy sea. They looked at each other, but somehow there was a misty quality in the starlight. The faces seemed already far apart. With a sigh that was almost a sob Carson said:

"We will never let go our friendship, old comrade?"

"Never. We are bound by a past we can neither of us forget. And then—there is Margaret; she loved you as a brother, and she is yet the star of my life. The sweetness of heaven, Carson, is reunion. We will find there our broken affections and friendships. If we are ever face to face in a battle-field—not as foes (we could never be foes), but each in the service of his

country—though 'you slay me yet will I love you.'"

The stars shone out clear and bright. The mist had gathered into tears.

An hour later they came into the drawing-room at Rosebank together. Carson had given his horse in charge to the servant who was waiting at the gate, and they had turned away from the house and walked in the dim light through the wood. Leszinksky had thought of the summer day and the beautiful woman when he sat down on the bank above the path where the robin was buried.

Sitting there, he gave Carson his last charge to and of his daughters; last directions for the care of the people whose progenitors had been for generations faithful servants of the Masons; last messages for his friends; and a request to Carson to care for Kate if she should have need of a protector. And Carson made every promise his comrade asked.

Then, standing in the shadows, they clasped each other in an embrace which was the seal of the past and the sign and the promise in the future.

When they entered the drawing-room Mrs.

Carisbrooke's quick exclamation of reproach was hushed when half uttered. She saw the reason for their delay in the faces of the friends.

Doctor Carisbrooke came from his study as supper was announced. Molly, Rue, and Steenie were in the supper-room when the elders entered from the drawing-room. As Leszinksky kissed Molly he placed in her hands two small packages.

"My gift and Steenie's, with our love to Cousin Molly."

Molly opened the packages. One was an exquisitely-painted miniature of Margaret, the other of Rue and Steenie.

Molly. "Thanks, Uncle Stan—thanks to you and Steenie; nothing could be more valued as a wedding-gift than we will value these."

Rue hurriedly left the room; returning before the examination of the miniatures was finished, she gave a small parcel to Carson, and to Molly an open case containing a superb set of pearls.

Molly. "O Rue! I have no words with which to thank you."

Rue. "Then, Molly, I will be glad if you do not try to find any. The pearls are a Cartaret gift of ceremony from 'the heiress of The Ce-

dars.' I think their selection is rather creditable to that disagreeable and much-worried personage; further than recognition of taste in the selection there is no need of thanks. But, Molly, do not take it to heart that Rucheil Leszinksky has given something of higher value to your sweetheart."

Carson opened the parcel, which contained another miniature. Molly leaning on his shoulder, they saw the face at the same moment and with one impulse turned to kiss Rue, Carson exclaiming:

"You have fulfilled the wish I made as I looked at the miniature of your mother. But how did you persuade 'King Stan' to this, Rue? He has always been obstinate in the matter of pictures—even mulish about so simple a thing as a daguerreotype."

Rue. "I did not persuade, nor did he consent. He knew nothing of it."

Leszinksky. "My picture? In what trap have I fallen?"

Rue. "The trap, papa, was the painting of the other miniatures. The artist caught the likeness as he could. I knew you thought I was rather importunate in begging you to come and keep our

'Humming-Bird' in order during those long sittings. Then you were there so often about mamma's picture; and, if you remember, there was always some reason for your going, and you always had the same seat given you. This is the result, and not the only one. There are two others; see, I am wearing one, and here, 'Humming-Bird,' here is yours."

Rue pointed to a brooch she wore—her father's head painted on ivory and set in pearls. She gave one like it to the beautiful child, who danced and sang her delight.

"Bring it here, 'Humming-Bird,'" called Leszinksky; then, as the child did not hear, he whistled a few soft notes. There was a rush of white drapery that rustled like wings, and Steenie was nestling in her father's arms. He, looking at the miniature, said:

"I do not know, Rue—in truth, I think one never does know one's own face—but I fancy the painter of this has won your patronage by flattering me."

Rue. "Is mamma's flattered, or Steenie's, or mine?"

Leszinksky. "No, I do not think they are."

Rue. "Neither do I think is this. In fact, I

quarrelled over it daily. I am afraid I bullied the poor little painter; I know I frightened him prodigiously. But the result was worth it. He said himself that yours is the best of the miniatures."

Leszinksky. "All of which proves the flattery. The poor fellow dared not paint me in my very habit as I live. He had the fear of you before his eyes. He was wise enough to find your weak point. Your vanity is not personal, my Rue."

The tenderness of Leszinksky's tone and glance brought his daughter to his side. Steenie had flown to Mrs. Carisbrooke, and all were busy with the miniatures. Stooping low, with her arms about her father's neck, Rue said:

"You are my especial vanity, papa. But yet it is personal, for you are my very own—the dearest treasure I have in all the world."

A tear dropped on the hand Rue raised to her lips. Looking into her eyes, her father saw shadowed in their depths the fear that was haunting her—fear for that which is dearest.

The doctor's voice grumbling a complaint was heard.

"Very fine, very pleasant—looking at pearls

and flattering Leszinksky. But it would be better for you all to eat your supper while it is warm. Hot biscuit and hot waffles have come and gone. The prairie chickens will be burnt, not broiled. Our Rosebank cook is a long-suffering and patient woman, but human nature finds a point where revolt to oppression is obligatory. Supper has been half an hour on the table, and travellers that ought to be hungry are yet unfed. Come here, Steenie. Your place is here beside me; we will eat our supper like sensible people."

The days the Leszinkskys spent at Rosebank that week were very quiet, happy days that lived always in the recollection of the guests and the hosts.

Carson's presence and Carson's happiness were the most salutary of tonics to Leszinksky.

Steenie, much to her own delight and his, was the doctor's constant companion. She would make quick rushes into his study, following him from the conservatory to the hot-houses, going with him to the stable with pockets filled with lumps of sugar for the horses, watching the harnessing, asking, with the soft, beseeching appeal of her beautiful dark eyes,

to go with him in his long morning drives. Whenever the weather was fit consent was always given. A basket would be quickly filled with hastily-improvised bouquets, which were left with suffering patients of the doctor's as visible reminders of the child who brought into those dull, wintry days of pain the loveliness and freshness of the spring-time.

Molly and Rue were equally inseparable, and in the long hours of their companionship their early attachment grew into a strong and noble friendship—a friendship rarely possible to women, for the lives of women are so absorbed by the affection they give in such measureless quantity that there is scarcely place for friendship. They are very ready to pledge themselves—believing, mayhap, at the time the pledge is made, in its eternal duration—to a sentiment they call friendship, which is simply another phase of the affection they lavish on their last caprice.

But between these two maidens the reality was possible, because the conditions of that truest, noblest, and most unselfish of sentiments were present. Their temperaments and way of thought were as widely different as had been their training and manner of life. But these dif-

ferences were harmonized through strong points of likeness. They were equally tenacious in liking and stubborn in surrender of such liking. Molly's was the more amiable but not the sweeter character of the two; yet Molly would seem the sweeter because of her steadfast calmness.

Both were truthful and honest beyond the ordinary measure of woman. Neither was given to that small lying, that petty duplicity, with which the sex too often think it needful to hide the rough edges of life. Yet here again results were different because their temperaments were different.

Molly's truthfulness was an adornment because it was never discourteous. Rue's kept her too constantly in the objective case. Her truthfulness was disputative, and thus it was frequently offensive. But after admitting that the balance turns again in Rue's favor. Molly never, or rarely, offended; consequently she was never humbled through confession of offence. Nor had she learned from the teaching of humiliation to make quick and cordial concession to others. All this Rue had learned through the misadventures into which she had strayed or fallen; and the impulsiveness that prompted

instant reparation won her from generous natures the liking which is all the stronger because it is conquered.

The stability of this new friendship, founded as I have shown, was made sure by mutual respect and esteem. It widened Molly's ways of thought and gave breadth to her judgment. She learned to be tolerant—the lesson which is so difficult to the well-trained and carefully-nurtured ornaments of society. To Rue this friendship was a still greater good—it had a decided and beneficial effect in the qualities she acquired from her friend.

I have made but a poor exhibit of Rucheil Leszinksky if I have not made the reader see and understand the strength and simplicity of her character. But I insist that just such characters are most susceptible to impression. They always catch some measure of the quality of those they love. Carson understood this truth so well that in her babyhood he had said of Rue: "She is not one who can touch pitch and not be defiled. I thank God, when she sees a scoundrel she scorns him."

Through her susceptibility Rue caught a small modicum of Molly's serene and calmly impartial

sense of right. One naturally speculates upon what deeper change might have been wrought in Rue if this companionship had lasted. Unhappily the companionship was broken by the onward march of the national calamity, which was approaching day by day with the swift relentlessness of Fate.

Mrs. Hartley, Miss Hilton, and their attendant cavaliers arrived the day before the wedding. Besides Roane, Bradnor was on duty; he had been invited at Mrs. Hartley's request.

Kate and the Carisbrookes were sincerely glad to meet again. Mai Hilton was, as Mrs. Carisbrooke thought, too effusive; which effusiveness Rue rather haughtily repelled, until Molly begged her consideration for the girl who had "never known either home or family ties."

Then our Princess softened—over-much, in fact, for her relinquishment of a prejudice suggested mistrust of that intuition which is woman's divinely-given safeguard, and more especially the safeguard of an intense and trustful nature.

While in this softened and contrite frame, that had already surrendered her to repentance, Rue

was introduced to "Mr. Bradnor" and recognized the "swamped lieutenant." Her unaccustomed humor, and her loving memory of the "squad" and the life that had been so dear to her, swept away all recollection of offence, except remembrance of herself as an offender.

A swift, amused glance from Carson brought a deep rose-tint into her usually pale cheeks. Both had thought of "the duel." Rue's womanliness was proved by her blushing face, and still more by her prettily apologetic greeting of her old enemy. Even her father, who was constantly expecting from her the new development of some hitherto unknown perfection, was surprised at her frank confession of the wrong she had done, joined to expression of regret for the wrong.

But her father's surprise was a mildly approbative wonder, very different from Carson's astonishment. For Carson, who had watched all the moods of her stormy childhood, would have been less exasperated, less dismayed, at renewal of her challenge than at this sweet apology. From that moment the "swamped lieutenant" was a *bête noire* to the fiery dragoon.

Then, too, Bradnor's manner of accepting ex-

cuse and apology as things of small moment, and the gracious effort he made to reconcile his old antagonist—to herself—did not tend to sweeten Carson's temper. Internally he even swore at Leszinksky for his courteous show of interest in his daughter's interlocutor. With an unconcealed expression of disgusted disapproval he was about to leave in search of his consoler when he suddenly recollected a forgotten appointment—a reason for interrupting Rue's colloquy. There was a very apparent spice of malice in his eagerness of speech:

"Excuse me, Rue. But some one is waiting in Dr. Carisbrooke's study to see you—some one I think you will be glad to see. A detachment from the old regiment arrived at Newport to-day."

At the news of "some one waiting" Rue turned to make her excuses to Bradnor; but the words, "a detachment from the old regiment," swept away all other thought. She was in the hallway when she met Oscar.

"Who is in the study to see me, Oscar?"

"Nobody now, Miss Rue. Marse Bob Stearns was thar a long time waitin', but he thought at las' may be you couldn't come. I think he was

kinder hurt, Miss Rue. He's jes' started back to the garrison with Major Carson's horse. The major ain't goin' thar to-night."

"How long has he been gone?"

"I'se jes' been helpin' him with his hosses at the stable; he ain't more 'an got out the gate."

"Go after him! Run, Oscar! Run! Bring him back to me!" They had both reached the door while she was speaking. She pulled it shut behind her. Oscar was already at the gate, she calling after him, "Faster! O Oscar, faster!"

Through the fading twilight she could see the strong, active runner fairly flying down the road toward the city. A light snow was falling, which the wind caught and whirled in feathery columns. She stood for a moment or two on the steps, the fleecy folds of her white evening dress seeming a part of the drifting snow. Unable to restrain her impatience, she ran down to the gate and then through it into the road to watch Oscar. Yes, he had overtaken the rider, who was forced to go slowly with the spirited horse he was leading.

Oscar had mounted the led horse, and they were coming back in a gallop. They saw her waiting in the road. A soldier muffled in a dra-

goon's cloak shouted: "Capin Rue! O Capin Rue! out here in this snow!" And he sprang to the ground beside her. Through sobs and laughter, laughter and sobs, she was crying:

"O Bob! O Bob! I did not know you were here. I did not know you were waiting. Forgive me, Bob. O Bob! I am so glad, so glad."

Without a word he caught her in his arms and lifted her to the saddle, wrapping her in the cape he took from his shoulders. Then, walking beside her, he led the horse to the little sheltered porch upon which Dr. Carisbrooke's study door opened. Throwing Oscar the reins, he lifted her down and carried her in. As he placed her in an easy-chair by the fire he said:

"You oughtn't to a-done it, Capin Rue. No, Capin Rue, you oughtn't to a-done it. I didn't think I ever would a-been sorry to see you, capin, but I'd a-ruther had nine-and-thirty on my bar' back than to a-seen you out thar in this weather. An' it's my fault, capin. If you war to die 'twould be my fault. I war a fool—a cussed, onery fool; beg your pardon, capin, but I can't help a-sayin' it. That's jes what I war. I mought a-knowed it war a mistake. I ought to a-knowed you better, and you a Leszinksky."

She was quieted now, but she was very pale, and she breathed in little, gasping sighs, each one of which pierced Bob like a knife. He knelt down beside her, and, warming the rug, wrapped it about her feet, looking up at her with a wistful, watchful look of sympathy. She threw back the cape and extended her hands.

"I am so glad to see you, Bob—so glad! I don't think I have ever quite left the regiment, Bob. Half of my heart has always been with you all out there on the plains. How could you think I would forget—that I did not care? Did you think I had forgotten how you followed me into the Comanche country? Did you think I could forget Pike? or Bouie's Hill and those we lost there? Did you think I had forgotten my chief, or how you fought to save him? My chief! my chief!—could I forget my chief?"

She was sobbing bitterly and Bob was blubbering like a whipped school-boy. There was a scraping of feet at the outer door, and then some one knocked. Mastering her sobs, Rue rose from her chair as she motioned to Bob to open the door. It was Oscar. The two men stood back in the shadow waiting. Rue was standing by the open fire, putting first one and then the

other little slippered foot on the fender to dry. Carson came in, and she asked:

"Cannot Bob put up the horses and stay here to-night? I wish to see him in the morning."

"Certainly, if you wish it, Rue."

"Good-night, Bob. Oscar will see that you are comfortable for the night." She gave him her hand, which he kissed with the strange delight and awe with which he had kissed her baby fingers when he first touched them; that was years ago at the time he was so nearly drowned saving her and her mother.

When the men were gone Rue bid Carson "good-night," saying she would go to her room.

Oscar sent Mammy Sara to her, and the child —in many ways she was yet but a child—was warmed and hushed to sleep upon the faithful breast that had been her shelter in her motherless babyhood.

Carson made her excuses to the Carisbrookes and told Leszinksky of her interview with Bob. Neither spoke the thought aloud, but that last scene in her life at Bouie's Hill was the picture that came out of the past.

The wind had died away after wrapping Rue in its fleecy gathering, and frozen drops from the

vaporous clouds had fallen steadily until day-break. Then the sun came out and every little particle lying in the sheeted fields reflected the broken rays, until the air was luminous and the world a-dazzle with the white radiance of the snow. In the morning Rue had a long, quiet talk with Bob before he went over to the garrison.

After Bob was gone she asked Mammy Sara where he had slept—she was thoughtful of the comfort of this dear friend. She was told that Mrs. Carisbrooke had given Oscar the key of the little cottage in the orchard. Rue remembered that Lucy had lived there, and she knew Lucy had never returned to Rosebank since she was in Philadelphia nearly two years before, the summer she nursed Mai Hilton.

Then she remembered her new resolve, and so Mai Hilton was surprised by generous and delicate kindness, which kindness, with her usual penetration, Miss Hilton translated into jealousy.

One bit of news in that day's letter to Rachel Pyle was: "Rue Leszinksky is *desperately* in love with *Mr. Bradnor* and nearly *wild* through her jealousy of *me*. She has found that her *pride* hurts no one but *herself*, and now she plays sweetness."

The wedding guests were assembling; the day was one of mild expectancy. There was feasting, and drinking, and music, and dancing, and smiles, and laughter. But Erinnys was ready to cut the threads of a nation's life. She must have let go some cobwebby spinning of lesser moment; how else can I explain the thrown-away tangle Bob and Oscar found in the cottage that had been so long tenantless?

Molly Carisbrooke was no longer Molly Carisbrooke. A reverend bishop—whose good life, now that he is dead, keeps his memory green in the hearts of the many that loved him—pronounced the nuptial benediction. Beautiful women and brave men assisted at the ceremony. But beauty withers in the long days of mourning, and the brave will fall in the storm of battle like leaves in the autumn woods.

O dread Erinnys! It is well that you dwell in those awful regions with the grim terror-breeding Shades, and that your spinning is unseen of mortals.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"This point is, to be sure, a very delicate one to treat; for in words, at least, the age has grown to be wonderfully moral. . . . But human nature, as far as I am able to learn, has not much changed since the time when Richardson wrote and Hogarth painted a century ago."

THE morning after the marriage the short distance of Carson's wedding-journey was accomplished in an hour's drive. He had been on leave of absence nearly all the previous summer. The changes in the disposition of the few regiments that were not actually needed in Utah and New Mexico, and the movement of troops in view of the threatening state of affairs in South Carolina, made it difficult for Carson to ask or obtain fresh leave. But Molly had already taken her place as helper. She decided that they would go from Rosebank to Carson's quarters in the garrison. She so strenuously insisted upon her preference for Newport that Carson delightedly yielded to her decision.

Mrs. Hartley, Miss Hilton, Roane, and Bradnor left the same morning for Washington.

The Leszinkskys, Carson's son, and Carson's

sister, Mrs. McCormack, were the only visitors left at Rosebank, and Mrs. McCormack was to meet her husband at the station for the evening train.

Dominie McCormack had left Rosebank immediately after an early breakfast. He had affairs of moment that needed his attention in the office of Friend Fisher.

It had cost the honest zealot the sacrifice of what he regarded as valuable time and a painful effort at outer adornment to come to the wedding of his wife's brother. Not that the dominie felt the slightest embarrassment over past difficulties. The time when, according to his judgment, though physically vanquished, he was morally victor in his combat with principalities and powers, had left him comforting, not mortifying, recollections. He had simply gone through the tribulations to which the just are called. He had suffered for conscience' sake, for which he had an indwelling sense of triumph and—that rarest and most perfect bliss to a bigot—the feeling that he had been a martyr to his beliefs.

He had rather a feeling of gratitude than resentment to those who had, however unintentionally, lifted him to eminence in the category

of witnesses who testify to truth through the shedding of their blood. Moreover, when you could get through the crusts that covered it, the dominie had a kindly disposition.

Thus the things which would have kept a resentful or sullen temper at slumberous heat brought forth the dominie's friendliness.

The invitation to Carson's wedding was the holding out of an olive-branch which seemed to him an amend, if not an apology, for the time when Carson had blazed out in fierce and profane words in a letter which threatened the dominie with personal chastisement—words of unholy and irreverent anger, that had made no more impression than would a passing blast of sounding trumpets and tinkling cymbals. For the dominie had never been self-convicted of wrong in the punishment inflicted upon his wife's nephew. He had himself been trained to a virtuous and orthodox manhood through the same argument; *à fortiori*, why should he not apply it to others?

As to Rue, the dominie felt there could be no doubt that she was the aggressor. Had she not answered words of wisdom and truth with the application of an instrument to the magisterial

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cranium, that came near trepanning him without help of surgery or benefit of clergy?

When the olive-branch was handed the dominie he asked his wife, as he had often asked himself: "Why should the just chastisement of an obstinate boy and a warning shake given to an impertinent little minx"—he was not classically choice in his selection of words, but he did have a hearty liking for strong old English—"keep us from friendly relationship or from acceptance of this invitation?—though you must excuse me for saying, my dear, that I consider your brother an unreasonable and profane blasphemer."

After thus relieving his mind of its burden of condemnation the dominie was silently acquiescent to the note and burden of preparation. Punctually at the hour named the McCormacks arrived at Rosebank and the Carisbrookes made them welcome.

The dominie was amiable, I might even say conciliating, to his old young antagonists and their respective progenitors. At the dancing he blew his arched proboscis with a note of defiant displeasure, but he did wisely manage to hold his tongue from further utterance. Mentally he

disapproved of many things he saw, but he most cordially approved of the supper. His "'isms" had not interfered with his digestion or made him a dyspeptic, as 'isms of their class are wont to do. His twists were in his brain, not in his stomach. The last had a keen and sensitive delight in the things of the flesh; and, happily, his next neighbor at the table was a divine of his own persuasion, celebrated as a controversialist and distinguished as an epicure. Thus the conversation was much to the dominie's taste, and the interruptions to conversation equally agreeable to his palate. Fortunately for his hosts, the frame of mind begotten of this doubled pleasure kept the dominie in a radiantly agreeable mood until he was shown to his room.

Then, as the gods of discord would have it, Oscar was usher. To the Rev. Mr. McCormack a negro was always an interrogation-point, or rather the finger-post of destiny in the march of the universe. Mrs. McCormack had remained downstairs with the revellers, so Oscar's stay was prolonged with offer of service. As "the man and the brother" drew off the new boots, which had been the crumpled rose-leaves in the

evening of the epicurean reformer, he commenced questioning:

"Were you born a slave or a freeman?"

"Me, sah?"

"Yes; were you born free?"

"I belongs to Marse Stan, sah."

"What!!!"

Half frightened by the tone, Oscar added, in his most suave and apologetic manner:

"To Major Leszinksky, sah. I was lef' to him from the Masons, sah—the Masons of Mount Hope. Doctor Carisbrooke was kin to 'em. Marse Stan's mother was a Mason, and his grandfather, old Judge Mason, raised me, sah."

"You mean you are a slave?"

"Yes, sah; I belongs to Marse Stan."

"And he brought you to Ohio?"

"Oh! yes, sah. He hardly ever goes anywhar, sah, without Oscar—leastways when I can be spar'd from home."

There was a ring of pride and triumph in the last words. And Oscar looked at his interrogator as if he could say more but modesty forbade.

"You unfortunate and cruelly oppressed victim, you unhappy slave! your ruffianly tyrant

must and shall release his unlawful hold. You were made free the instant you touched this blessed soil, coming as you did with his knowledge and consent."

"I don't know nothin' 'bout none o' them folks, sah. I belong, sah, to Major Leszinksky."

"Do you mean to say you do not know what freedom is—that you are willing to remain a slave?"

"I know plenty of free niggers, sah; I've seen 'em mostly in the North, sah, but we has got a few in Virginia. But me? I was raised by old Judge Mason. I belong to that family, sah—one of the very best, sah, in the State."

"You do not understand me, my poor friend. I mean to tell you that the instant you came into Ohio with your master's knowledge and consent you were free. The law frees you. Do you not want to be free?"

"I ain't never studied 'bout that, sir. But if you means do I want to leave Marse Stan, sah, or my Miss Rue, or the family, sah—no, sah! I was raised with Marse Stan, sah. Why, this fam'ly wouldn't sell me, sah, for all the money anybody mought offer. No, sir; no money wouldn't buy me, sah."

"But you can leave them. I will put on my boots and go with you this night to Friend Fisher. He's an anti-slavery lawyer; you can be free to-morrow."

"I ain't got no 'casion, sah, to go to no Marse Friend Fisher. I wouldn't leave Marse Stan no more 'ner he'd sell me, sah."

"But do you prefer to be a slave? Have you no sense of manhood? Do you not want your freedom? And your wife and children—would you not have them free?"

"I ain't got no children, and my wife was—"

He stopped abruptly as the sore spot in his life was touched. Words would have been impotent, even if he could have told of his marriage with Lucy, and how and why he lost her. Speech was impossible; but the gleaming eyes and the pose of the tall, strong figure, with the clenched fists and the head thrown back until the swollen muscles were brought into full relief, expressed a grief so deep that it was speechless.*

* The story of Oscar, which is only indistinctly outlined here from the necessities of the drama, is fully told in "Baby Rue." The author would like, if it were possible, to write again the narrative of the life of the Leszinkskys on the plains, and of the noble devotion of the black man who, alone with Bob Stearns, followed his master's child, when she had been captured by the Pawnees, into the heart of the Indian country.

"Sold away from you? I knew it! Taken, possibly, for a concubine. A slave's wife is not his; she belongs to his master. Your master robbed you of your wife!"

"What!" The negro advanced threateningly and the dominie retreated rapidly toward the door. But Oscar stopped.

"You don't know Marse Stan, sah, so I won't take no 'count o' what you said. He would no more a-took my wife, sah, than he would take yourn—an' she's Marse Carson's sister, an' Marse Carson's like a brother to him, sah. But me? Why, my mammy nussed him when she nussed me. Why, he'd—yes, sah—*die* to keep me from bein' put upon and wronged. *Marse Stan hurt me? Marse Stan!* You don't know Marse Stan. An' you'se made a mistake, sah, 'bout me." And Oscar strode out of the room without waiting for dismissal.

The next morning after his early breakfast the dominie asked for Leszinksky. He told him frankly how he had questioned Oscar, and his determination to take advantage of his having brought Oscar into the State. He said he was not yet satisfied that the slave understood his rights, and that he intended to send Friend

Fisher up to see and question him, but that after Oscar's testimony to his master's kindness he thought it only right to be frank.

Leszinksky thanked him for the complimentary confidence, and pledged his word that Friend Fisher might talk as long as he liked with Oscar, or at least as long as Oscar would listen, adding that Oscar might decide the question of freedom for himself.

Coming into the library half an hour later, Mrs. Carisbrooke was astonished to find the dominie a pleased listener to Leszinksky, who was earnestly discussing with him the possibilities and future of the negro race. They differed widely in views and methods, but Leszinksky's courtesy was conquering the dominie's prejudice when Roane appeared, and Mrs. Carisbrooke managed to inveigle him into the discussion. I am not sure her malice was not more specially aimed at Roane than the dominie. But when the doctor and Carson came down Leszinksky was a silent listener and the wordy war was hot and bitter.

The dominie took leave, and in the afternoon Friend Fisher came and interrogated Oscar. Then he had a long interview with Oscar's mas-

ter, and left in a rather depressed and contemplative mood.

Rue spent the day shopping in the city with Mammy Sara and Stanislaus Carson. Steenie was out with the doctor. After luncheon and after Friend Fisher's visit Leszinksky was alone in the library, writing, when Mrs. Carisbrooke opened the door.

"You are busy?"

"Something that can wait. I will be very glad to put the writing aside and talk with you."

"Then I will come in, for I have something to say."

Leszinksky placed a low easy-chair on one side of the open fireplace and arranged a screen to shade the face of the lady, who, busied with some knitting-work, seemed to forget the "something to say," although the willing listener was seated opposite, waiting.

"What fascination there is in knitting! It always seems to charm women. Is it the weaving of meshes or the playing with steel that is the attraction? Or are you conscious that your beautiful hands are shown at their best in the flash of the long, slender needles and in the rosy glow of the firelight in that crimson wool?"

"The exhibition and the pleased vanity, of course."

"Which acceptance of motive your tone denies. But you know you have beautiful hands; and why should you not wish them to be seen?"

"Did that coxcomb Bradnor bite you before he left? I never knew you to talk folly before. Isn't it rather late for you to bloom out in such flower?" She was so evidently nettled that he laughed; then she laid aside her work with an affectation of great carefulness, at which he laughed afresh.

"Stan, I do not like to be rude to you, but silliness in you is so unexpected that it puts me out of temper. Moreover, I wished to consult you about something which is serious and which worries me."

His manner was instantly attentive and sympathetic:

"I am serious; and you know I am always at your service."

"I sent Oscar night before last to the cottage in the orchard with that soldier from the garrison. The servants' quarters as well as the house were crowded. There was no other place to give the man. Lucy had been away so long

that it seemed needless to keep it always unoccupied—though the furniture is Lucy's own, and I have always respected her right to her home. Carisbrooke had it repaired and put in order for Lucy. She seemed happier out there, and she had nothing in common with our servants. There are two rooms and a roughly-finished shed. Every time Lucy vanishes I find the front-door key left in my basket. She always takes with her the key out of the padlock which fastens the back door, or else hides it somewhere in the shed. When she returns from one of her long absences she always goes to the cottage before coming to the house; and, as you know, we never speak of her absence. She simply resumes her place in the household.

"I had given the key of the front door to Oscar. I did not think of his relationship to Lucy; I had forgotten it. An hour later I met him in the hall near the dining-room. I think he was going to your room. I knew you had gone to your room. I asked him if he had made a fire in the cottage, and if it was in order, or did he need anything? He hesitated, and I questioned him sharply, and then he told me that the house had been opened before they went out there. He

found a fire nearly burned out in the stove. I said, 'Lucy must have come back,' and he answered, 'Yes, madam, Lucy is here. She's somewhere in the house here now.' He seemed intensely eager and excited, which made me remember all of Lucy's story. So I asked:

"'Do you want a place for the soldier? If that is it you must make a pallet for him in the doctor's study. Where is he?' He told me the man was in the kitchen, and I bade him go with him to the outside door of the study. When I opened the study door Oscar started to go into the hall. I told him that Major Carson was with you, and again I asked what he wanted. Then he said he wanted to see Lucy. I told him I would see if she was in the house. I left them in the study, intending to speak to Carisbrooke, but Carisbrooke was with you.

"Now, no one has told me, but I know Mai Hilton is Lucy's child. I thought instantly Lucy was in Kate's room. Mai Hilton roomed with Kate.

"As I passed Molly's door I heard Kate talking with Molly. Rue was asleep, so I knew that Mai Hilton must be alone. But as I knocked at her door I heard voices. They did not hear me.

Before I could knock again the door was partly opened and Lucy stood on the threshold, looking back with a wild, scared expression into the room. I heard Mai Hilton say: 'Never come to me with that lie again. I detest, I abhor you! I would take my own life if I thought I was your child!' Lucy's hands were now clasped and extended to the girl in piteous entreaty. I never saw such an expression of suffering, agonized motherhood. I suppose I did wrong, but I could not help it; the feeling for Lucy, sympathy for her lonely life, recollection of her suffering, of her half-insanity, made me identify Mai with Hartley. One had robbed Lucy, the other denied her.

"I took Lucy's hand and led her up to Mai, saying: 'She is your mother. You were taken from her. She was robbed of her child and sold as a slave. She never deserted you or consented to give you away. Lucy will not ruin your position in the world by telling the story. For Lucy's sake I will not tell it to any but one; and that person is not one of my own family. Molly does not and shall not know. The world shall never know, but you must acknowledge your mother. You must think of her and not of

yourself. She has suffered cruelly for you and because of you. She is your mother!'

"Lucy had fallen on her knees at the girl's feet. The girl is a Hoyt. I had thought her all Hartley until that moment. But she is akin to her grandfather the gambler. She faced me without a tremor, saying: 'I know you have never liked me and that you are willing to humiliate me. But I do not think you would lie. What proof is there that this woman is my mother?' I told her the plain, unvarnished truth, saying: 'She belonged to the first Mrs. Leszinksky, who was, as you know, a Cartaret. Mrs. Leszinksky sold her to Major Hartley when you were born, that your father might free you both. Major Hartley is your father. Mrs. Cartaret gave you the name of her first husband.

"'Your mother refused to give you up, and your father sold her to a negro-trader. Major Leszinksky forced your father to redeem her and free her.' The girl looked me steadily in the eyes as the tale was told. Lucy was prone upon the floor with her arms about the girl's knees. Suddenly Mai stooped and lifted Lucy's head, and the two faces were close together. 'Yes,' she said, 'I believe you are my mother,

but I will not live to acknowledge it. If you prove this disgrace upon me you will drive me to my death.' Without a word Lucy got up on her feet. She kissed the girl's hands. I knew, and Mai knew, that her mother had given up all claim, that it was their last parting. Once more the girl spoke: 'I am sorry for you—for your sake I am sorry that I am your child—but I swear that the man who has caused you to suffer and caused me this torture shall pay dearly for it. I never wish to look upon your face again; but I am sorry for you.' Lucy silently came with me from the room. I went with her to the cottage and left her there with Kate's maid. We had met Rose in the hall, and I knew that Rose had recognized Lucy. Some one must stay with Lucy, and I thought it had better be Rose. It was well that Rose was there and that Oscar was watching the cottage—for Oscar did watch. Before morning Lucy had one of those frightful attacks. And she is now in such a condition that Carisbrooke thinks it will be necessary to send her to an asylum. I knew Rose would tell Kate, so I told her that night. She was with Lucy nearly all yesterday and part of last night. A nurse came from Longview yester-

day, and Oscar is almost constantly in the next room. He is often needed, for she is violent. Carisbrooke and I both thought it best to keep the story from you until after Molly and Carson were gone. Besides, Kate asked me not to tell you while they were here."

"Was Miss Hilton told of her mother's situation?"

"No; Kate said the girl was suffering terribly. It is a horrible blow to her vanity. But I assure you since I saw the Hoyt blood show in her I think better of her. It was not a mere threat that she made of death. I saw she meant it, and that if driven to extremes she would keep her word."

"I must go to Oscar," said Leszinksky, rising.

"Yes, I think it will be well; there is a look in his face that frightens me. Did you ever think that he might kill Captain Hartley?"

"Oscar once expressed a fear that he would, to Margaret; and Carson believed that he would have done so if he had not been sent away. If the dominie knew what would be the result of Oscar's being made free I do not think he would have sent Friend Fisher to ask for so doubtful a

boon. Has Carisbrooke decided when Lucy is to be moved?"

"Yes; she will go to Longview to-morrow."

"I am glad of that. I could not take Oscar away while she was here and he could be of use. But when she is gone I must get him home at once."

CHAPTER XXX.

"Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch'd along the plain they go.
They dash'd the rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew."

IT was a quiet, uneventful winter at "The Cedars." Steenie was a pupil at the convent in Richmond, and Rue was reading industriously with her father. She had objected to going back to Philadelphia, and in the general uncertainty as to public events Leszinksky was glad to devote himself to his daughters.

Every Friday afternoon Rue and her father, on two of the famous Cartaret thoroughbreds, followed by Oscar leading Steenie's pony, arrived punctually at the convent gate—much to the delight of a gaping crowd of idle negroes and small children—unless the weather was stormy. But even then the neighborhood was no less moved; for the high-swung family coach with its four thoroughbreds and two outriders was an equally attractive sensation.

Outside of "The Cedars" the world was less quiet; it marched to a more martial strain. Virginia was still waiting and striving to patch up a peace, but in the distant South "the sound of the trumpet mingled with that of the clarion."

The cotton States had seceded, and their senators and representatives had resigned the places they held at the federal Capitol.

The "Peace Conference," which represented all the border States, had their report summarily voted down in the Senate, while in the House it was contemptuously refused reception.

The State of Virginia had called a convention, which was elected on the 4th of February. The majority of those returned to this assembly were Union men. But the action of the federal Congress upon the report of the "Peace Conference" had so changed the feeling of the State that delegates who were sent as Unionists were now ready to vote for secession. Then came the bloodless affair at Sumter, followed by President Lincoln's proclamation of the 15th of April calling for seventy-five thousand troops. And the secession of Virginia was the immediate result.

Roane made a hurried visit to "The Cedars"

on his way to Arkansas. When Roane left Leszinksky accompanied him as far as Richmond.

Roane only tarried a day in the capital of Virginia, but before he started for Arkansas Leszinksky had tendered his services to Governor Letcher. He was appointed lieutenant-colonel of one of the first regiments raised in the State. That was the third week in April. On the 6th of May Virginia was admitted into the "Southern Confederacy," and the regiment to which Leszinksky belonged was assigned to the brigade of General Robert E. Lee.

One perfect year had been framed in the setting of Rue's stormy life, and then the land was aflame with WAR! The household at "The Cedars" was broken up.

Steenie's home was to be permanently in the convent, and "Mammy Sara" was to go with her delicate nursling.

Despite Leszinksky's feebly-expressed remonstrance Rue decided for herself—she would follow his fortune.

Rue's maid and Oscar completed the camp household. The chances were that Leszinksky's regiment would not leave Virginia, and it would

always be easy to find quarters sufficiently near camp.

Of her father's command Rue knew comparatively nothing. Comradeship would have been possible only with the old regiment; now that old regiment was sure at some time to face them in the fight. That was the one stinging fact she felt pierce the heart of her patriotism. Ah! if they were only with her how gladly would she have fallen into the old grooves. Side by side with them and her father, little would she have recked the leaden rain and the iron thunderbolts of the battle.

Of the war only one scene comes necessarily into our history.

In the earlier battles Colonel Leszinksky had come out unhurt. The brigade to which he belonged had become accustomed to the little group which always waited near the ambulances.

A slight, pale girl with a cold, set face, scarcely conscious of the impatient fretting of the thoroughbred that would have been off with every rattle of musketry had not the hand been as firm as the face was resolute, was always waiting there, attended only by a groom.

A quick glance as the wounded were brought out of the fight, a tightened grasp of the reins, a whitening of the scarlet lips—no other expression; neither question nor murmur, always the same proud, patient composure until the battle ended. Then a rush forward, if it were possible, until she joined a silvery-haired officer. There was a quick look that for these two had all of inquiry, all of reply, a grasp of the hand, and side by side they rode silently until they were alone and speech was unrestrained.

So the time had sped; they had never yet met any of the old comrades, but father and daughter knew they were there, at the front. Day after day the panorama of war was unrolled. They were never out of hearing of the guns and sight of troops.

Even in their infrequent visits to Steenie Rue found that social life in Richmond meant camp life, garrison life, the life of a beleaguered city—a life that from its very intensity was natural, simple, earnest. Conventionalities grew into traditions or took new forms. Everything fashioned itself to suit the change. Men of the heroic type developed under the trials, while the baser sort were more aggressive, more boastful.

Modern and multiplied editions of Falstaff, Bardolph, and Poins were in every camp. Yet as offset many a noble and princely Hal, who had run riot through idleness and the imperfectly trained and untamed energy of youth, broke the bonds that held him and came out of the sulphurous smoke of battle purged and purified by dangers met and self-denial practised in the service of some wounded comrade.

Woman also changed with the time and reflected the time.

The motherhood that had been restricted into the narrow channel of family grew broader and fuller with a boy at the front. The woman's heart overflowed and poured out in kindly deeds. Her life was busy with its sweet charities. She brought cheer and comfort to the soldier stricken down by bullet or disease that destiny brought to her door. Light seemed the task, precious the labor, when she thought for whose sake it was done and to whom the return would be made.

Mothers were not alone in their devotion: wives, sisters, daughters lost what was dearest and bravely took up the burden of the life that was left.

I claim for my countrywomen—and I know that, I do not claim too much in so saying—that in all the history of the world no women ever sacrificed so much, suffered so much, endured so much, yet met sacrifice with such cheerfulness. Their heaviest losses were borne with a fortitude and constancy that brought hope to men who were faint and helpless in the presence of ills that seemed too grievous to be borne.

To understand the social life of that time we have to take into consideration the fateful elements of which it was constructed. No mere narrative of daily events can portray life as it really is, if the deeper meanings of resultant effects are not studied. Social life is always of necessity a surface picture; yet we are more in accord with the artist if we know why the shadows deepen and from what point light is reflected.

In those long years active causes, terrible forces, were brought into play, while all softer sounds were drowned in the sobs of the tragedy chorus. In the presence of such elements men led nobler and women more natural lives.

In the camp with its chances, in the battle with its dangers, education went on. Yet reason was

not altogether free; there was of necessity the restraint that grows out of the habitudes of military rule. Thought wore deeper channels, but the channels were in a measure marked and narrowed within fixed limits. Discipline taught the patience that waits on supreme direction.

In the Confederate army each soldier felt the influence of illustrious example. The first captain of the age was also the humblest Christian of his day—peerless in battle, pure in heart, brave because it was his nature to be brave, but confident in his courage because, with the simple faith of a little child, he left results to the Highest.

He did his duty manfully, resolutely, not for man's praise, but for God's approval. How could such a man fail to stamp his likeness on his epoch? So from the highest to the lowest through society, through the army, if men were not ruled by the right they at least respected the right.

A great leader always grows to be the conscience of a people; his character expresses the time, because in a measure he makes and rules it. And so that time could not fail to touch the highest, at least in endeavor, when Lee and Jackson were its exponents.

By the happiest combination of characteristics Jackson's greatness in nowise lessened that of his chief. Each seemed the complement of the other; and thus was preserved the perfect fitness that won their marvellous successes in the field and in camp, through the effect of their characters upon the character of the army. From them the wave circled and widened.

Another influence, less marked because it lacked the brilliant setting of action, though not less real in effect from the example it afforded of fortitude and resolution, was that of the head of the government. It has been so constant a practice since and during the war to misrepresent, slander, and condemn President Davis that the world looks only for such base and baseless attack, and would regard as misplaced praise any expression which did him the most meagre justice. Even his own people have fallen into the mistake of avoidance of his name; and that from no want of affection or grateful appreciation, but for fear it would needlessly rouse more bitter animosity, more envenomed criticism.

Now that this most cowardly of all virtues, discretion, has failed to silence slander, now that the failure is felt, it is the duty of every lover of

honor and truth to declare the fact that Jefferson Davis represented the beliefs of the South. The place of president came to him unsought, unsolicited; his own personal preference was the army. Who that knew him as a soldier in the early days in the Northwest, or later on the plains of Mexico, where his gallantry forced praise and thanks on the battle-field from that stubborn old hero, Gen. Taylor, can doubt what a good sword was lost to the Confederacy when he was made president and his own cherished ambition was laid aside? All of this is easily seen now that we are face to face with results.

In '61 it was difficult to foretell events or their effect upon the future of peoples and States. But few believed in a long duration of the war; consequently it was a grand pageant, at which all assisted.

That hot July day when bullets were flying at Bull Run had failed to teach the South at what cost battles must be won. It had flushed the soldiers with pride and with the rank lust of war. It disorganized and reorganized society, which took upon itself a semi-military state.

In every drawing-room grand campaigns were planned by loiterers who thought it needful to

return to the army only when the enemy's guns sounded a recall. The Richmond drawing-rooms were crowded with volunteer officers who flocked to the city upon the slightest of pretexts, while masses of raw and undisciplined troops represented at the front the bravery and patriotism of the new nation.

All was in an inchoate and unsettled condition, and the discipline of the army was a fluctuating impulse dependent upon the accidents of victory and the temper of its commanders.

One of those commanders was busy with his political aspirations. "Within hearing of the enemy's guns" he was amusing the enemy with his newspaper effusions, declining the nomination as Mr. Davis's successor in the presidential office six years before it was vacant. Yet the harmless vanity of the *poseur* for greatness was less hurtful to his subordinates than the ambition and jealousy of the Bazaine of the South, then in command of the army in Virginia.

The two men who were to weld that army into formidable shape and win for it imperishable renown were yet unknown outside of Virginia.

Lee's only record was that he had patiently sustained reverses while endeavoring to repair the

disaster at Rich Mountain; and Stonewall Jackson, in a subordinate position, was as yet only a vague outline of prophecy.

Leszinksky's regiment had been ordered to Western Virginia in the early summer of '61. After the failure at Cheat Mountain Lee was sent to take charge of the coast defences in South Carolina and Georgia, and Leszinksky's regiment joined General Evans's brigade.

After the battle of Leesburg Leszinksky was promoted and given command of a regiment which was ordered to join General Jackson at Winchester.

From that time he was in constant and active service, being in every engagement during Jackson's famous campaign in the Valley of Virginia until the 10th of June, when he was ordered to Richmond.

McClellan was closing in his advance upon Richmond. The brigade of General Leszinksky (promoted again at the capture of Winchester) was encamped at "The Cedars." Steenie had not been well, and the child begged to come home now that her father was there. In event of a change in the position of the troops she could easily be sent back to the convent. During

Steenie's visit Rue yielded to her father's wish and stayed at "The Cedars," although his division had been ordered some twelve miles away and there was constant skirmishing along the line. The heavy guns were never silent, and the constant movement and massing of troops foretold the nearness of the great struggle for the possession of the Confederate capital.

It was the 26th day of June, 1862. The day had been unusually hot, and Steenie was more restless and impatient than usual; this excitement was telling upon a peculiarly delicate and sensitive organization. General Leszinksky always, if possible, came to his daughters during the evening. This night he came late and brought news of the near approach of the Federal forces. In view of the effect of further excitement on Steenie he insisted on her removal to Richmond; he was anxious and worried, and therefore Rue made no objections. The needful directions were given to the servants, and at midnight General Leszinksky returned to his command, not, however, before Rue had given an order to Oscar that she knew would be obeyed.

"If the battle commences to-morrow stay near your master. Follow him with an extra horse;

he or you may need it. Take 'Grey Duke,' and if anything happens to my father, at the risk of your life come to me here. You can be sure of finding me here."

"Yes, Miss Rue. You kin count'n Oscar's comin' if thar's anything wrong."

"To-morrow night you can tell my father that I am here and that I am waiting to come to him."

"Yes, Miss Rue."

"Do you perfectly understand these directions?"

"Yes,'m. I'se to come fur you if marster's hurt. If he's all right to-morrow night I'se to tell him to send you word whar to come."

Early the next day Steenie and her faithful old nurse left for Richmond under the escort of an invalid officer of her father's brigade. At ten o'clock a brigade from General Jackson's command arrived from the Valley and were met with an order to encamp at "The Cedars." There were old friends of General Leszinksky's in the party, whose families Rue had visited when the war had swept near them. Now she was glad to make them welcome, and the day was shortened from the duties it brought, although that dis-

tant cannonading was never silent! The night passed—no message. They had breakfasted when Rue was told "Oscar is on the porch thar, Miss Rue, waiting to see you." She went directly, extending her hand.

"You have a letter?"

"No, Miss Rue."

"A message?"

"Not exactly a message; marster didn't tole me, but I thought I had better cum."

"You did right to come. Will you know where to find the division?"

"Marster's not gone with the division."

"Well, the brigade?"

"He isn't with the brigade nuther; he's at old Mr. Shirley's 'folks' quarters,' in old Uncle Ben's cabin. Don't be skur'ed, Miss Rue; he's a-livin', but he's hurt mighty bad. Dr. Wilson and ole Uncle Ben's with him; but I did jes' what you tole me, Miss Rue—I come straight fur you."

Trembling and faint, Rue sat down on the steps; the servants crowded around with kindly words.

"Don't, don't cry, Miss Rue; don't cry, honey! Marster'll get well. You'll find him

all right. 'Tain't long since Oscar lef' him; he mos' killed 'Grey Duke' a-comin'."

She had no time for grief—that must come after—so resolutely she got on her feet.

"When did you leave my father?"

"Jes' about nine o'clock. I wa'n't much mor'n an hour a-comin'. We can get thar, Miss Rue, 'fore noon."

"Saddle 'Kubleh' for me; you must ride 'Blackhawk.' We have no time to lose."

She turned and met her guests; they had heard the news.

"What could they do?"

"Nothing, gentlemen. Yes: general, please write me a pass; it may prevent delay."

In ten minutes Rue and Oscar were off. Much as she wished it, she dared not go at racing speed. The horses must not give out. If troops were in the way it might double, treble the distance to be traversed; fifteen miles might stretch into thirty, or even fifty. Oscar's knowledge of wood-paths and cross-cuts was of great help. Twice they were halted; the pass must be shown. The last time the officer, having read it, said:

"I have seen you on several battle-fields, Miss

Leszinksky. The boy says your father is shot; I hope not fatally?"

The rude question was kindly meant, but the words "your father is shot" for a moment staggered Rue as if she had received a blow. Then a resolute effort of will and she was riding on "to the front," leaving distance behind. Only two miles more—two miles—and she would be with her father. Every pulse beat, every nerve quivered with eager hope and desire, every thought was a prayer only to reach him, to find him alive and conscious.

Again the road swarmed with troops. Beyond were heavy guns to which they were harnessing fresh horses; passing them was impossible for the present, so again she turned into the tobacco and corn fields.

Just at the head of the narrow gorge through which her path led she suddenly rode into a group of Confederate officers lying at ease under cover of the undergrowth of scrub-oak and hazel-bushes which fringed the hillside.

The creek in the ravine ran in a southeasterly direction. On the brow of the hill, or rather heights, on the right were newly-constructed earthworks held by the Confederate forces. The

creek was nearly at the base of this ascent, with only the road between.

On the left of the creek the valley was possibly some fifty feet wide; then there was a gradual ascent through an open woods that had, however, a close fringe of willows on the bank. Three-quarters of a mile down the ravine, or gorge, a little rivulet cut the hillside on the left of the creek, and below it rose suddenly a bold, high cliff; around that a bridle-path led to the "folks' quarters" of the Shirley estate. There in old Ben's house was General Leszinksky.

Within an instant after Rue came upon the group of officers they were around her. Many of them she knew slightly. She could see they understood how terribly she was stricken. Kindly hands were extended. General Stuart, as he lifted her from her horse, said:

"Your father is inside the enemy's line. There was a blunder as to orders after he fell, and the hill down below the gap is in possession of the Federals. So are the woods on the left of the creek. Fortunately the Stonewall brigade hold the heights on this side. We are massing troops here to dislodge the enemy. Pelham's battery is there on that knoll, just getting

into position. Before night we will take you to your father, if they have not removed him."

"Is my father mortally wounded?"

"I trust and hope not. I saw one of his aids. He thinks the enemy may not find General Leszinsky. Old Ben is faithful and trustworthy, and Dr. Wilson is there."

"General, I must go to my father."

"You cannot. I dare not permit you. It is not an hour since the enemy were driven back in an attempt to storm the heights. This is only the lull before a fresh storm. Here is Pelham. He will tell you it would be madness to attempt to go down that gorge. Major Pelham—Miss Leszinksky, the daughter of General Leszinksky. You know, major, he is wounded and at the Shirley quarters. You will tell Miss Leszinksky how utterly impossible it is for her to go there."

"Major, my father is desperately wounded; he has no son, so I, his daughter, have the right to dare all, to risk all, to reach him. Only one mile to go!—only one mile, and my thoroughbred will do it in less than two minutes."

"Not down that rocky valley. If it were at all possible no one would stay you a second.

But you would risk almost certain death. War is no longer chivalry—it is *war*."

"I would rather die in the way than wait—than fail my father in his need."

"If it were possible I would send a flag of truce. There are United States regulars on the hill—General Carson's brigade."

"Oh! I know him well. I am his goddaughter. I was born and brought up with his old regiment. You see how safe it would be for me."

"If they knew you, yes; but in the woods between are Connecticut volunteers. As a soldier's daughter you must know we cannot send a flag now during an engagement. In a few hours the hottest of the fight will probably be here. General Carson will hold the cliff stubbornly. If you will be patient we will all do our utmost to make the waiting short. General, let me see you one instant."

A few moments, and as Major Pelham crossed the open space below where Rue waited a volley of bullets whistled by. Oscar was rubbing the foam from "Kubleh's" flanks, whilst a soldier held the bridle of "Blackhawk." Rue called Oscar as a scout came up to the general to report. Her directions were quickly given:

"See to the girths, then put me up. Do not try to follow me; it would endanger us both. Come to-night if it is possible. You know the country well enough to pass the pickets."

"Yes, Miss Rue; you can 'pend on me."

The general came with the information:

"The enemy are crowding reinforcements to this point and to the left. I must leave; but Pelham will keep his promise. Now I must send you back with an escort."

Rue beckoned Oscar and he put her upon "Kubleh." Gathering the reins hastily before the others should mount, she moved toward the path down the hillside, saying:

"General, you have done your duty as gentleman and soldier. I must do mine as a soldier's daughter. I am going down that ravine—straight to my father."

And she was off, down the hillside where the bridle-path wound through the bushes into the road, calling back to them:

"Do not come after me; you will make the danger greater: you will only draw on me the enemy's fire."

Seeing them halt, she recklessly rode on—the thoroughbred at racing speed—one hundred

yards, and as she crossed an opening between the willows on the bank there rained a shower of bullets. The distance before she must cross the creek was nearly made when "Kubleh" stumbled.

The mare quickly recovered, but the speed slackened. Was she shot? Rue did not know. Still the balls whistled by. Not a sound from the Confederates on the heights until then, when the shells screamed over Rue and she knew Pelham was trying to clear the woods to her left.

But there on the cliff were the marksmen of the plains. One volley from them and her doom was sealed. How to make them know her? how to live long enough to reach her father? Only to reach her father—she had no thought, no care but that. As she turned to cross the creek a ball touched her. It took her hat and unbound her hair. Again "Kubleh" staggered, then struggled on. How to make them understand?—Bob Stearns and those men up there, who would rather die than harm her. Yes; she thought it out at last—an old trick they had taught her. They had called it "Captain Rue's Salute."

Riding now steadily, slowly, perfectly erect, that they might see, she took the bridle in her teeth, and bending her whip, holding it as the arc of a bow with her arms high over head, on she rode, steadily on, slowly up the slope. For a minute the firing of Federals and Confederates had ceased. One minute, then a sharp volley whistled from the left. As that sound died, above from the cliff stalwart men swarmed down, Bob Stearns's voice bellowing out:

"It's Capin Rue, and them damned volunteers keep firing at her. STOP IT! STOP IT!! or we'll sweep you to h—l."

The thoroughbred had won her last race—won it with a bullet through her.

As the mare fell Rue was caught in strong arms and carried up the cliff, while a wild, piercing Confederate yell from the earthworks across the ravine rang out congratulation. Unhurt, safe, in the centre of a group of men who were sobbing around her like children.

Rue looked in their faces through blinding tears, gasping brokenly:

"My father is down there in the Shirley quarters, desperately wounded. Will you take me to him? They tried to stop me up there—Gene-

ral Stuart and Major Pelham—but I would come. I thought you would know me; some one would be sure to remember."

Here General Carson broke through the circle and the men fell back. He took Rue in his arms and kissed her. In a few moments she was with her father, crying tears of mingled grief and joy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
. . . . . .
Oh! fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four square to all the winds that blew."

IN a sheltered spot, out of reach of the storm of battle which raged furiously, they pitched a tent, and there they carried Leszinksky. Words fail in telling the kindness of those rough men, the loving sympathy of his old comrades among the officers.

At times, in a half-conscious waking, he seemed to recognize the old, familiar faces, and then would talk in broken sentences of the camp out there, of the life on the plains, and of Margaret. All between was effaced.

At nightfall came General Carson, calling Rue to one side:

"We are going to move from here, Rue. Which had you rather do, my child—go with us or try to get your father home?"

"Home, if possible; when my father is fully

conscious he will want my sister. But how am I to get him to 'The Cedars'?"

"Those Connecticut fellows are coming over here to hold the cliff—if they can when Jackson wants it. You know their colonel—Bradnor, the 'swamped' lieutenant. Of course the dandy has everything they will give at the War Department. He has the best ambulance in the service. I will ask him for it. He will hardly dare refuse me, and I will leave Bob and three of the men with you. Oh! did you know Oscar has got in with a horse of yours?"

"He is unhurt?"

"Yes; he flanked your pickets and ours, and made it safely. I believe a negro would squeeze through a snake-hole to pass a picket-line. Can he drive well?"

"Yes, rapidly and carefully."

"Then he can drive the ambulance. Your father can have the doctor in with him. I can mount two of the men, and they can change with the others. Two must walk by the ambulance. These Virginian gullies are something to cross. You have the horse Oscar brought, and you know the Confederate officers in front of us. The only trouble will be when these volunteers of ours

leave (and they will leave, with Jackson over there). Stearns can hold your horses and ambulance until then; but in the rush of the rebels?"

"Major Pelham is sure to remember that we are here. We will be safe with the Confederate advance, but Bob and the men—"

"Must see you home. There is no time to change escorts in a fight, and this one is no child's play. The men must take their chance about getting back to the brigade. I will have to parole your father and Dr. Wilson; then Bradnor can make no difficulty about it."

"I do not need to thank you, general?"

"Yes, you do, Rue; it's confounded hard to give you up. *D—n the war!*"

"You forget I have a way of catching your expressions. They brought me to grief once, and that last is tempting."

"You know we all love you, Rue, but I don't think you realize how devotedly. If you are in any need, if any help is wanted, let us know; we will come to you, if possible. If it is impossible, some one will come—Molly or Mrs. Carisbrooke. Good-by, my child. May God spare your father!"

Colonel Bradnor came with offer of help, with words of sympathy, all courteous attention to Miss Leszinksky, to Dr. Wilson, and the most considerate kindness to General Leszinksky. He anticipated every possible want. Until then Rue had let liking be ruled by attraction and repulsion. She now thought that an unjust prejudice had blinded her to Bradnor's good qualities, so she forced a reversal of judgment, or rather forced judgment to the other extreme, and credited the man with every chivalrous, every noble quality.

General Carson had said truly—the Connecticut brigade did leave when Jackson advanced in the early morning. They did not stand upon the order of their going. In an instant, it seemed, after hearing that wild rebel yell there was a rush of pursuers and pursued.

The Stonewall brigade were in the advance. There was a hurried greeting, and the little party were left to wait until the division had passed and then commence their slow movement homeward.

Rue was on "Blackhawk," escorted by Bob and one of the men. The two others walked by the ambulance. Doctor Wilson was in it with Les-

zinksky. Oscar was driving. Slowly they passed up the ravine. On the heights was a division unknown to Rue. Her father had grown faint; they stopped.

Bob and the men were standing a little apart when an officer and his staff rode up to them and asked:

"Are you prisoners? Where are your passes?"

Bob answered: "We ain't got no passes, and we ain't prisoners, so be an' Capin Rue don't keer to make us sich."

"Then what the h—l are you doing here in that Yankee uniform?"

"It's ourn. We belong to the United States regulars. 'Tain't exackly a parade uniform (we ain't got on our best), but this is good enough to fight in. Nobody's complained on it yet."

"You d—d impudent Yankee, I'll put you in irons—I'll—"

Rue rode in front of the men.

"I am Miss Leszinksky. My father, General Leszinksky, of General Jackson's division, was wounded yesterday and taken prisoner. He was paroled by General Carson, of the United States regulars, and these men were left with us as

escort and protectors when General Carson retreated."

"Very well, miss. You do not need the protection of Yankees now. I will give you an escort. These men are my prisoners. I will not have such impudent scoundrels loose here in that uniform."

"They are not prisoners. They were given as an escort to my father, and you touch his honor if you fail to treat them with the courtesy due to gallant men who are here in obedience to the order of their general."

A young officer touched Rue's arm and said in a low tone:

"Your appeal to that man is useless, Miss Leszinksky. He does not understand the code of gentlemen. Do you know General Lee?"

"Yes."

"There he comes across that field with those officers. Go to him."

She rode rapidly to meet the advancing group. General Lee stopped.

"Miss Leszinksky, to meet you here proves that your father is better than I had feared. Pelham told me of your desperate ride. Were you any other than your father's daughter I

should compliment your noble devotion. To your father's daughter I can only say you have fulfilled his expectation and mine."

"Thanks. My father is there in that ambulance, badly wounded, unconscious most of the time. I come to ask a favor."

"It is granted before the asking. I have faith in your discretion."

"Did you know my father was a prisoner with the regulars of his old regiment?"

"Yes; Pelham told me they were there. I know Carson."

"Then you know how kind he is and what gallant men they are—officers and soldiers. I was brought up with them. General Carson feared I might need assistance and protection, and he left with me four men of our old command. There were changes of troops before General Jackson captured the heights, so these men were needed to keep the ambulance—you see they gave us an ambulance. And now an officer there, the one near the ambulance, has ordered the men held as prisoners. He threatened to put them in irons. Will you permit it?"

"Certainly not!"

And he rode on with Rue rapidly to where they had dismounted Bob.

"Colonel, who are those Federal soldiers?"

"They are my prisoners, sir."

"Where did you capture them?"

"Here."

"I did not know your regiment had been engaged. From what command did you capture them?"

"From no command, sir; these were inside of our lines."

"A safe place to capture prisoners. I trust you will do as well at the front. Who is in that ambulance?"

"A wounded officer, sir—General Leszinksky."

"Did you not know these men were given to him by a brave enemy as a guard of honor?"

He hesitated, then commenced a muttered "I knew they were in the Yankee uniform."

"Did you not know they were with a wounded general officer and his daughter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then, sir, report yourself under arrest."

The superb gentleman took off his hat to Bob and the men.

"You are gallant and brave men. As a soldier I honor you. Will you excuse the blunder in your reception?"

"It don't make no difference, sir; you see I never expect much of volunteers. Now, I'd a-know'd you was a reg'lar, sir, anywhar. I'm powerful glad we come up with you. You see we'd a-been disapp'inted and the regiment would a-been disapp'inted if we hadn't a-seen Capin Rue and the major safe in quarters."

"Who is Captain Rue?"

"She's thar, sir. She's our child. You see her father was our old major, and her mother was one o' God's angels. Never a poor woman sick on the frontier thar—even so be an' 'twas an Injun—but she helped her. Nothing ever hurt the regiment like when she died, an' we jes' took her darter for ourn. An' you see what we made on her, sir. If you'd a-seen her yesterday, sir, riding down that gorge, her father behind us thar, sir, hard hit, and we didn't know it! An' we didn't know her, sir. We saw them damned volunteers—beg pardon, sir—a-firing at somebody. And then we saw it was a woman, so we didn't shoot, sir. God's marcy, sir, we didn't! She jus' rode slow at us—*slow*, sir—an' they a-fir-

ing at her, till we knowed who she was. Then, sir, if they'd a-killed her there wouldn't a-bin one on them left this side of hell, sir—beg pardon, sir."

"Tell your regiment how I respect, how I honor them. They are kind as they are brave. When you have seen your captain home and have had time to try her hospitality I will send you back with a flag of truce and a letter for your general. Until then you are Captain Rue's prisoners. Miss Leszinksky, Captain Baskerville will go with you to 'The Cedars.' I do not think there is another man in the army would give you any trouble, but we will risk nothing."

Then he rode to the ambulance, talked with Dr Wilson a few moments, and was gone.

It was night when the sad little company reached "The Cedars." When they were within three miles of the house Rue rode rapidly forward with her escort to prepare for her father. She found the house nearly filled with wounded officers. The division encamped there on the 27th was gone, and roughly-built wooden sheds had been put up and tents hurriedly pitched to shelter the wounded who had been able to bear the removal this far from the battle-field.

The beautiful lawn sloped from the house to a wooded creek which wound in many twisting backward folds through the plantation before it was finally lost in a larger and more sluggish stream that crept through swamps and deep morasses to the Chickahominy. The crowded house and the noisy lawn determined Rue to take the library for her father.

It was in a quiet wing, half-detached from the old mansion by a square hall which made a private entrance to the library while separating it from the main building. It opened in front upon a garden, or pleasaunce, as it was called in early colonial times, and was hidden from view, and almost from sound, of the tents on the lawn by a close, thick hedge of old clipped cedars and a tangle of untrimmed cedars beyond the hedge, which, with the scattered clumps of loftier trees that dotted the grounds, gave its name to the estate.

Behind the library a grassy slope of velvety turf stretched in long, billowy rolls to the pebbled bank of the encircling creek.

A hedge, so wide that it seemed rather a strip of tangled undergrowth and dwarfed cedars, entirely defended these grounds from view or en-

trance from the offices and outbuildings which were behind the opposite wing.

At nine o'clock the ambulance arrived. Rue's hurried arrangements were all completed, and in less than half an hour her father was in the bed she had prepared, and with him were the surgeons, who had been hastily called from their quarters on the lawn to the consultation in the library.

Shut out from her father's presence Rue's first thought was to send for Steenie; and then she busied herself with other tasks—with care of the wounded in the house, and with the preparation and distribution of things needed in the meagrely-provided hospital tents, and with arrangements for Bob and her escort.

Notwithstanding Rue's intensity and the zeal with which she undertook these new duties, there was in everything she did thought of her father, but thought that was entirely unlike the confident looking forward to affectionate approval which had been so large an influence in her life. Now there was a half-formed sub-consciousness that she was doing what her father would have wished her to do, at terrible cost to herself, and that he might never know, might never under-

stand, that it was because of his teaching, and of her love for him and reverence for his teaching, that she was forcing herself to think of duty. To think of duty when she knew she was about to lose the father who had always been nearer and dearer to her than all others! From her babyhood he had been her idol. Her friendships had always been loves, but her father had been supreme in her life. For his sake she had put aside sorrows that she had never forgotten.

But with the thought of his loss—and the thought had been present with her as a conviction from the instant she had understood that he was wounded—came the old griefs. She could not at that moment think of anything life still held in store; she only thought of those death had taken and of this best-beloved who was about to leave her.

When the work she had set herself was finished she went into the hall next the library to wait for the coming of the surgeons, who were still there. She could hear quick steps upon the uncarpeted floor and subdued voices. Then in a still interval she heard a gasping moan. With a shriek, which even in that outburst of agony she tried to repress, she fell senseless on the floor.

Dr. Wilson found her there. They carried her to her room, and when she recovered consciousness pain and grief were lost in the dull lethargy produced by narcotics.

BOOK THIRD.

FIDUS ET AUDAX.

"*Phœbus volentem prœlia me loqui,*
Victas et urbes, increpuit lyra;
Ne parva Tyrrhenum per æquor
Vela darem."

—HORACE, liber iv. ode XV.

PART FIRST, '61 TO '68.

THE PANORAMA OF WAR.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents."

THE messenger sent for Steenie the day after her father was brought home to "The Cedars" found her with Mrs. Hartley. The noise of the cannonade and the knowledge that her father was in the battle had such effect upon the nervous, delicate child that the sisters at the convent had yielded to Mrs. Hartley's entreaty that Steenie might stay with her until the battle, which must decide the fate of Richmond, should be lost or won.

Kate and Anne Warrington were domiciled with a maiden lady, a kinswoman of the Warringtons. For a picture of the past and the reason of Kate's residence in Richmond I will transcribe two letters lying upon Kate's desk—one from Mrs. Carisbrooke and an unfinished reply, which were hastily gathered up and carried to "The Cedars" when the messenger arrived at Miss Esmond's, whither he had been sent from the convent:

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from St. Catherine's Wells, Canada, May* 10, 1862.)

"My dear Kate: A Kentucky friend has offered to send any letters I could have ready for Richmond to-morrow with assurance of their safe and speedy arrival. I shall obey the instructions you gave Mrs. Cartaret and send this care of Miss Esmond, Richmond, with whom Mrs. Cartaret thinks you and Anne Warrington may be staying. I am assured that it will be put in her hands.

"I have had no news of you since Mrs. Cartaret left you at Belleview in March and so successfully ran the blockade while McClellan was watching Johnston's Quaker guns. That exceedingly limited note which Mrs. Cartaret enclosed in a letter from Oakhill is the only scrap of your writing I have seen since I parted with you in Washington last September.

"Mrs. Cartaret wrote me that she left Anne Warrington at Belleview; and she also wrote of this second burning of 'Castlewood.' You will know how sorry we were to hear of that loss. It is one that must affect all Virginians; for the home of the Esmond-Warringtons was the scene of many famous gatherings of the old

colonial gentry, and there were found the MS. notes of that wonderful autobiography of their illustrious ancestor which Mr. Thackeray has so happily edited. It is a matter of congratulation to us all that the old family portraits were saved.

"My dear rebel friend, if this burning goes on it will disturb and possibly kill my known loyalty.

"Now, you know that I was particularly disgusted with Southern assumption before and after the battle of Bull Run, just as I had been with the contemptuous phrases with which the Northern newspapers were filled *apropos* of 'chivalry' and of 'fleet-footed Virginians.'

"I assure you, my Kate, that after you left us I was in the most vibratory state of mind. I had become impressed with the idea that I was the only sane person of my acquaintance; and when the wildly insane of the Northern or Southern incurables opened up in my presence in rabid abuse of the unfortunate section which their geographical lunacy opposed, why somehow, before I was exactly conscious a dispute was begun, I was in the thick of a wordy battle.

"The only peculiarity in my case was the double lunacy. My interlocutors had one indi-

visible and well-defined mania. In spite of myself I had either two or none. Before a battle I was for both sections. After the lists of the killed and wounded came, I was ready to cry out with Mercutio, 'A plague o' both your houses.'

"If I had gone South with you, Kate, what a Unionist I should have become! It would have completely reunited the Cincinnati 'house of the Carisbrookes.'

"Confidentially I will tell you that Carisbrooke and Molly are *nearly* rabid. Carisbrooke was always a Federalist; and Molly, through sympathy with 'Red-head,' out-Herods Carisbrooke and completely distances 'Red-head' himself. He, poor fellow, is my only support in my opposing household. He—well, he *dashes* the Abolitionists, and fights sturdily on because of the flag above him and the one that challenges it across the way.

"To prove to you how broad-church I have become in these modern days I need only mention that I smile patiently when 'Red-head's' *dashes* are most resonantly audible.

"Now for what I hear from Paris.

"My friend's news is told in this wise

"'The great sensation of Paris is the beautiful

Miss Hilton, whom I met at Molly's wedding. Her beauty and her eccentricities are a wonder to the French, and even startle the American colony. Were she one atom less beautiful the "eccentricities" would be quickly transposed into "shocking imprudences." But when a woman is a living, breathing goddess she is above the plane of feminine jealousy. It is now a thing of national pride to challenge the world with her perfections. It seems she quarrelled with Mrs. Cartaret, whose first husband was her relative, and thus lost a discreet chaperone—a chaperone rated in Paris (outside of the colony) as entirely *comme il faut.* Since then Miss Hilton has a sheep-dog—a retired governess promoted to companion. This would be sufficient for an emancipated young married woman, but it is hardly the thing for a young girl who drives in the Bois in the centre of a cavalcade of admirers.

"'Even the philosophic "colony" smiled cynically last week when they saw a young American officer by her side and the "sheep-dog" alone on the opposite seat, its innocent pug cocked at the passers-by or else turned with a mildly contemplative glance at the lake-side.

"'The goddess plays the American against the fast and disreputable—if dukes can be disreputable—Duc de Rameaux. It is currently reported that she is engaged to the man of buttons, but is ready to throw him over for a ducal title and a place at court. Query, Will the duc propose? That depends! Is Miss Hilton an heiress? If she is not I suppose her engagement with the young officer will bloom into orange-flowers another season.'

"My conclusion, from what my correspondent writes, is that the engagement is real—real, unless the grandchild of the prince of gamblers shuffles a court-card from the pack of—followers. But I suppose you know more of Miss Hilton, *née* Hoyt, than I do. Mrs. Cartaret went straight to you when she returned from Paris last January.

"How queer seems this talk of dukes and Miss Hilton with Lucy sitting by the window sewing! I am sure you will be glad that she is much better. We brought her home from the asylum in March, and Carisbrooke thought she had best come with me here.

"I will let the subject slip off my table. There are other bits to write you. You have heard the

senile raptures of grandmothers, and you shall not catch me sinning that fashion. But I do wish, my Kate, you could see the infant that bears the name Carisbrooke Carson. I think the abbreviation far prettier, and to please me Molly calls my grandson 'Brooke.' Of course there are, and have been, wonderful exhibitions of infantile wisdom in the house since he came, 'trailing his clouds of glory.' But for the telling of these things look not to me. Since I left home—to cool my own and my neighbors' tempers—I have pages from Molly that are chronicles of the book of perfections she is busy compiling. You will be surprised to hear that Carisbrooke himself is no wiser. I did not think to live to see his premature dotage.

"I suppose I ought to end this letter without a word of military comment. I cannot resist the whisper of a question. Do you not think *we* have so set our nets that we shall catch Richmond? If we do capture the virgin city what will you do, my Kate? That you could not go to Paris with Mrs. Cartaret and leave your people at Belleview to the chances of war I easily understand. That you would not stay in Washington without her I also understood. But now

Mrs. Cartaret is at Oakhill. Will you not come there, Kate?

"I will offer you a bribe. If you will come to Oakhill, *when the road to Richmond is opened*, I will meet you there and stay until after peace is made. Frankly, I would not care to be in Cincinnati while peace is a-making. I am sure I should turn secessionist or mad with the cackle I should hear. At Oakhill you and Julia and I would go into mourning for the 'nation that had not the strength to be born.'

"Now, Kate, my dainty Kate, write, 'an thou lovest me.' I know you can and will find a trustworthy bearer of despatches. And do not fail to write news of Leszinksky, and Rue, and Steenie. Where is Roane? You can direct here —*until the road opens*—for I will not return to Cincinnati until the *malady that brought me here is cured.*

"Always yours,

"VIRGINIA CARISBROOKE."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Richmond, June* 25, 1862.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: To prove to you how glad I was at sight of your letter I

have only just finished the reading and am already commencing an answer. It will have to be written in patchwork fashion.

"The excitement here is too great for me to settle steadily even to a talk on paper with you. Everybody in the town is in some way busy with the preparations for the defence of Richmond—which, let me assure you now, your people will *not* capture. But I do not believe one iota of what you say of your Unionism. Blood is thicker than water, and you are a Virginian. So hereafter when I say *your* people I shall mean us.

"I am glad you have quarrelled with your bloodthirsty Yankee neighbors. You might as well have told me the story: I know you have quarrelled with every one of them, else why are you in St. Catherine's with a *malady that has no name?* It must have been a battle-royal before they routed you. Yes, I know it all: *you were routed*, horse, foot, and dragoons, or you would never have retreated from before the enemy. Let me console you with one reflection: we are fighting your battle here, and we will win it.

"When General McClellan is captured, or flies before Stonewall Jackson's foot-cavalry, you can go back to Cincinnati in a most serene and for-

doing their very best; and it is something to see such women at their best. It makes one feel that the country is worth living and dying for. Without that how terrible would be these scenes: these broken families, the suffering wounded, and, worst of all, the dead—*our dead*—that we are all resolved shall not have died in vain!

"A little over a year ago we laughed at society doing the military and at the declamatory talk of pretty viragoes; six months, we thought, would finish the worry. A year has gone since then—a year—with the end no nearer. But the pretty viragoes are changed; they are patient women now, prayerfully waiting events, taking up earnestly the duties of each hour. The most frivolous are hushed and awe-stricken in the presence of the griefs that are in our midst. Poor little butterflies! the gloss is brushed from their wings.

"*June* 27.—But you want personal news of your relatives and your old friends. General Leszinksky has been at 'The Cedars,' or near there, for the last two weeks. He was in the Valley with Jackson and was promoted this month for 'gallantry in the field.' He now commands a brigade which was camped at 'The Cedars' until last week. Three days ago he was in Richmond.

I met him on the hill near Mr. Davis's residence. He was on horseback, riding with a gentleman in a plain gray suit who wore no insignia of rank. As I bowed they rode over to the sidewalk to speak to me, and under the slouch hat of General Leszinksky's companion I recognized the calm, grand face and soft, dark eyes of our commanding general. Our talk was the very briefest, but your cousin asked if I 'had any news of the Carisbrookes and Carson.' He said he would send Rue and Steenie to Richmond, and promised they might come with me from the convent if 'things grew dangerous.' I looked at General Lee as I said, 'You mean if the enemy are likely to take the city?' I did not mean to ask *him* the question, but he answered it: 'Do not be alarmed. You are safe in Richmond. *These people* will be captured or driven back to Hampton Roads.' Then we shook hands and I walked on with tearful eyes and a swelling in my throat. '*These people will be crushed or driven,*' *but oh! at what cost.*

"Yesterday Mammy Sara came and brought me a note from Rue. General Leszinksky had directed her to come with Steenie to Richmond. She sent Steenie, but Rue would not come.

I think it is the first time she ever disobeyed her father. He must doubt the result; at least there is apprehension when he sends his daughters to town. And 'The Cedars' are further from the enemy than the enemy is from Richmond. Mammy Sara said that Steenie was ill from pure fright and nervousness, so Anne Warrington and I went to the convent for the child. The sisters let her come with us, and she is now out with Anne and Miss Esmond.

"I thank you for news from Paris.

"I am fond of Mai in a way that I cannot make you understand, unless your feminine intuition has already given to you the whys and wherefores. I pray she may marry wisely—wisely meaning a marriage of affection, not ambition.

"It is pitiful when one thinks how few are drawn together, and so heavenward, by a love that touches the soul. We are all, or almost all, of the earth, earthy; and so we go on stooping in constant search of the dross that glitters, and we forget to look upward for the light and warmth that come from heaven. So the eyes see only the things for which the baser senses cry out, and we are blinded by the darkness in which

we have lived—so blinded that if we are turned at last to the light we stumble.

"I have already said something of what the war is doing in the way of transformation; I was about to add Rue as an example. But Rue is simply Rue—nothing more nor less than she was. The war is but the sombre setting of a peerless jewel; the dark background only brings its facets into full relief.

"The rich heiress of 'The Cedars' is the most unselfish and simple-minded woman I have ever known. She is also one of the most scholarly and unpretentious. She was reading with her father the winter before the war. Since then she has been a hard and constant student in every spare moment. When I laughed at her heavy reading she said, with that slight flush and resolute look you know: 'I do not care for the books—I am sorry I do not—but I do care to be my father's companion and comrade, and I wish to understand a subject that is of such interest to him.' The books were on military history and military tactics! I remember your saying she ought to be queen of Poland. With what strengthened conviction you would say it now! She has no rose-and-lily beauty; nothing to sug-

gest comparison with the girl your correspondent describes as a goddess. But Rue has the most wonderfully refined and spiritual face. It is a dainty, delicate face at first view, an Ariel face; but I heard an artist say last week—an artist who had seen her riding by her father's side at Leesburg under the fire of the enemy's artillery: you see even our artists are soldiers now—that her face was 'an inspiration and a revelation; one only needed to see it to understand the battle-face of the young girl who led the French to victory.'

"I could, and would if I were with you, talk of Rue for hours, but I must tell you of your other friends.

"General Roane is in Richmond, or rather out on the line of Richmond's defences. He is in Longstreet's division, and was with him at Williamsburg, where he took five guns from *your* General Hooker. When you hear of Longstreet's next victory, which I trust and believe you will this week, you will forget your *Unionism* long enough to rejoice in your friend's success.

"General Roane is and has been very kind to me. On his way from Williamsburg, after he

had whipped Hooker, he stopped at Belleview, sending one of his aids to Richmond to ask my permission to send the servants here and with them everything of any value. The house, he said, would probably be in the line of the enemy's march (they occupy it now; a servant who had been left there slipped the lines and brought me the news), and the able-bodied negro men had better come here. I sent him discretionary powers. The result is, the greater number of the servants and everything of value have been sent to Danville. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke is there with his family, and he has been most kind —as he always is and has been. Having been my father's executor, it seems right and proper for me to transfer my worries to him.

"I dined with Rue at 'The Cedars' the day after they arrived from the Valley. General Roane was there. He is kind and thoughtful and watchful for me, as his going to Belleview proved. But his courtesy is distant, and there is an embarrassing quality in his manner that I cannot well describe and that would be difficult to define.

"*He never mentions Major Hartley*, nor do any of the family at 'The Cedars'—which brings

me to a question I wish to ask: Have you ever heard of Major Hartley's saying publicly that my residence in Virginia 'was in opposition to his wishes and entreaties, and that he would be glad if the separation were completed by a divorce'? It is told in Richmond that he said it, and the reason given is that 'he is going over to the Republican party.' Miss Esmond heard it and very properly told it to me.

"I cannot talk of this to General Leszinksky, and there is no one else here I could ask.

"Can this be a reason for General Roane's changed manner?

"You can learn the truth and you will tell it to me.

"You know that I came South with Captain Hartley's approbation. Of course I wanted to come, but I would have gone with Julia to Paris if he had advised it. He did advise the very course I would have chosen, and I came here because of his counsel. He gave me reasons that I supposed really influenced his opinion. He said that the negroes might leave Belleview or be seized by the Confederate government if none of the family were in the South. Did you not hear the subject mentioned when you were in Wash-

ington? I could write to Julia, but she loves me, I think, better than she loves her brother, and it would embroil her with him if she questioned him. Julia's temper is hot and her words quick and biting; I will not be the cause of her quarrelling with her brother.

"A young English gentleman is now in Richmond who was in Paris for some time this spring. He brought me a letter of introduction from Mai. Very frankly and innocently he spoke of her as a kinswoman and ward of Captain Hartley's. Do you think he has recognized or intends to recognize Mai as his daughter? Do not think I should object; on the contrary, I feel it is what he should have done when he placed her at school in Montreal. Now explanations will be awkward for Mai's own sake.

"Steenie has returned from her walk. I will finish this letter to-morrow.

. . . . . .

"O my friend! my friend! a messenger has just arrived from 'The Cedars.' Rue has sent for me to bring Steenie home. Their father is mortally wounded.

"'*The Cedars*,' *June* 29.—General Leszinksky may linger some time; that is what the surgeons

say this morning. He has two wounds—one in the right side; the ball has been extracted; another wound in the head. Dr. Wilson tells me that either would be fatal, but you will hear more than I can write from General Carson. How good he was to Rue, and how we all love him! Rue's escort will be sent back by General Lee after this horrible battle is ended. I shall finish this scrawl before they go.

"*June* 30.—General Roane has just arrived with a broken arm and a slight wound in the leg. He had heard that General Leszinksky was dying and he would be brought here. At last! at last! war has come to us in all its terror. General Leszinksky is hardly ever conscious. Rue is with him night and day, except when Dr. Wilson forces her to rest. She does that only that she may keep strength enough to nurse her father. All his talk is of long ago and of my cousin Margaret. Love is stronger than death.

"*July* 7.—The men are to go to Hampton Roads to-day. An aide of General Lee's and one of General Roane's are to go with a flag of truce in charge of Rue's escort. I shall send open letters by the officers, but Bob Stearns

takes this sewed securely in his jacket. I know you will get it. Can you not come to Rue? O Mrs. Carisbrooke! come if possible. I fear this grief will kill her. I pray night and day that her father may recover consciousness. He alone can reason with her.

"Lovingly your friend,

"KATE."

Sometimes better, but never entirely conscious, General Leszinksky lingered through the summer. Mrs. Hartley and Anne Warrington stayed constantly with Rue. Col. Bradnor was at Fortress Monroe, and everything an invalid needed was sent by him to "The Cedars." Medicine and delicacies, even at that date difficult to get in the Confederacy, arrived weekly. So the chain was being forged!

In the early fall Leszinksky died. His suffering made Rue willing to let him go. In the last moment he was perfectly conscious. Rue held Steenie in her arms to kiss him; he motioned for Rue herself, and struggled for speech:

"Kiss me—you, Rue—my blessing—my pride —my darling—promise—"

"Yes, my father, you can trust me. I will

keep my promise. I will prefer Steenie's happiness to mine."

Again through difficult effort at speech: "Not — *that* —promise— you won't—sacrifice— you— Rue—my Margaret's child." And Rue was fatherless in the instant she knew what place she held in his heart.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"O Navis! referent in mare te novi
Fluctus."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from "The Cedars," October* 25, 1862.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: You surely never received the long letter I sent by Bob Stearns. And yet the one short letter Rue had from General Carson, sent through 'the authorities that be in command over us,' mentioned Stearns's arrival. In that letter I begged you to come to 'The Cedars'; and I am very sure the request would have been heeded.

"Rue knew that I had written you to come, and it is evident to me that she is desperately hurt at the failure. She had been so confident of your coming, and she also seemed sure Doctor Carisbrooke would come with you.

"Her father was conscious for a short time before his death. His dying words were all for Rue; but there was a pitiful look of appeal in his face, as though he missed some one in whose care his daughters could be left.

"Rue spoke to me once, a few days after his death, in a manner that proved the bitterness of her disappointment. It was only a short sentence, but the tone and look said even more than the words: 'Could anything have kept my father or me from going to Molly in such an extremity?'

"I will keep this letter until I am sure of a safe messenger; and if my letter was not received *do* write an explanation to Rue. I have never seen so great a change in any one as that lamentable death has made in my cousin. She is moody, imperious, and stubborn, and, in her proud resistance to grief, is disdainful of sympathy. The one sentence I have written you is the only allusion I have ever heard her make to her father since his death. Not a servant is privileged to speak of him; and you know what an affectionate patriarchal relationship existed between master and servants at 'The Cedars.'

"Steenie alone can do as she likes with her sister; and Steenie is being injudiciously spoilt.

"It would have been so much to these girls if you had been here! It would be so much to both if there were over them the wise rule of a firm, kind guardian! They have needed you. They

now need General Carson. I believe their father left them to his guardianship. O Mrs. Carisbrooke! every one that loved Stanislaus Leszinksky must think and care for his daughters.

"General Roane was captured at Sharpsburg, and I hope you will be able to see him before he returns. I hear his exchange has been arranged by General Lee.

"Your brother, Mr. Robert Carisbrooke, was here last week. He insisted that we should all spend the winter in Mobile with his wife. He has taken to Alabama all of my negroes, except a few attached home-servants who are now living in the overseer's house at Belleview. My father's home was burned during the battle on the Chickahominy. I went over there with Mr. Robert Carisbrooke last week. Only stacks of tall chimneys are standing to mark the ruins.

"Two hundred of Rue's negroes are in Alabama on a plantation Mr. Carisbrooke bought for her. He had quite a discussion with her about a gift she insisted on making to the Confederacy. But she had her own way and *gave* seventy-five negro men to the government. She clothes and feeds them, and they are to be freed when the war ends.

"If Rue proves persuadable we will all go to Mobile next month. I hope much from General Roane's influence; and I hope he will bring us tidings of you.

"*November* 9.—General Roane is here, but no especial news or letters from Rosebank. I am glad he saw General Carson. I think the messages he brought from her father's oldest and best-beloved friend have softened Rue. She has, however, decided not to go to Mobile, and for what reason do you suppose? Why, *Steenie* prefers to stay at 'The Cedars.' Not much wonder! She is queen absolute on the place.

"Rue insists that I shall go to Mobile; and as Dr. Wilson's wife has come and will make her home here during the war, it is decided that I leave here next week for Mobile. We stop on the way for a few weeks to see to the welfare of the servants on the new plantation near Selma."

All that fall and winter Steenie was ill, and Rue was roused out of her grief to care for the child. That far it was well for her.

What was ill for them both was the effect upon Steenie. Her sister's devotion, the unrestrained indulgence of every whim, the constant study of

the entire household to anticipate any probable wish, fostered a selfishness which was hidden—as the selfishness of a weak character often is—under an amiable prettiness of manner which made the soft-spoken thanks seem over-payment.

Bob Stearns had strictly obeyed orders. The letter for Mrs. Carisbrooke was never taken from its secure place in his jacket until he saw General Carson, which—owing to a difficulty Carson had with Pope, the newly-appointed commander of the Federal Army of Virginia—was in September at Bowling Green, Kentucky.

The letter was then given to Carson, where it encountered fresh delay. Late in October, after the battle of Perryville, he made a hurried visit to Rosebank and delivered the letter into Mrs. Carisbrooke's hands.

Through Doctor Carisbrooke's brother they had already heard of Leszinksky's death. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke wrote that he had settled the able-bodied field-hands belonging to Mrs. Hartley, the Warringtons, and Rue with his own negroes on lands he had bought in Alabama. This letter, written two months later than Mrs. Hartley's, suggested a possibility that Kate, Rue, and Steenie might winter in Mobile with his wife. He

had taken a large, comfortable house there belonging to absentees who were in Europe, and Mrs. Robert Carisbrooke would be glad to have them with her, for her husband would be compelled to be much of the time upon the newly-settled estate near Selma.

Thus it happened that Carson and the family at Rosebank were entirely ignorant of the fact that Rue was alone that winter at "The Cedars" with only Steenie, Mrs. Wilson, the wife of the surgeon of her father's brigade, and two invalid soldiers from Missouri who could not return to their homes, which were inside of the Federal lines.

Again all outside kindness and help for the household at "The Cedars" came from Colonel Bradnor, who, before and after Pope's disastrous campaign—which, in the opinion of that braggart, "entitled his army to the gratitude of the country," and Jackson's capture of Harper's Ferry—was stationed at Fortress Monroe.

Every flag-of-truce boat that went up the James brought fresh proof of Bradnor's generous thoughtfulness for the orphan daughters of Leszinksky.

Before his regiment left Fortress Monroe to

join Burnside on the Rappahannock he came to City Point, when General Roane, who had been captured at Sharpsburg, was exchanged. With Roane's luggage were several cases Bradnor sent to "The Cedars" which provided comforts and luxuries for the coming winter.

After Burnside's defeat, through influence at Washington (Hartley, converted from belief in secession and State-rights, was now a violent war Democrat), Colonel Bradnor was returned to Fortress Monroe—a position he doubly coveted. It was a pleasant, safe, and comfortable post, and it brought him again within possible line of communication with the heiress whose fortune would more than evenly balance old Simon Hartley's conditional legacy.

Before spring he had succeeded in getting a pass for Rue and Steenie to go through to Canada, and had escorted them to Montreal.

Steenie was placed in the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where Rue was received as a guest until her sister's health should be entirely re-established.

Twice during the summer Bradnor visited them. Before the second visit ended he had certainly won the affection of the younger sister.

Rue's winter quarters were in a small hotel. Mammy Sara was her only attendant and chaperone. She had heard through a chance acquaintance that Mrs. Carisbrooke was with some friends who were living in Paris.

The following summer Rue was again with her sister, and Bradnor's visits to Montreal were repeated.

Steenie brightened in the glow of his attentions, and Rue argued well of the man from the child's liking.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"The heart beats high
And the blood comes quick; but the lips are still
With awe and wonder.
. . . . . .
Alas for a heart that is left forlorn!
If you live, you must love; if you love, regret.
It were better, perhaps, we had never been born,
Or better, at least, we could well forget."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Richmond, May* 1, 1863.)

"SINCE the long letter I wrote you from Mobile last winter I have waited patiently for the happy chance that might bring me a letter. Now I hear you are in Paris, which I most heartily regret.

"Rue had gone with Steenie to Canada when I reached here, although I came in March that I might see her. I trust General Carson may go there to see them.

"Captain Hartley's cousin, Colonel Bradnor, got them a pass and escorted them to Montreal. He has been most constant and considerate in attention since he met Rue at the time her father

was wounded. During General Leszinksky's illness, and since, he has never failed to keep them supplied with every possible luxury which an invalid might need. He sends me Rue's short notes telling of Steenie's improvement and her devotion to this new friend—Rue tells me nothing of herself—and then he despatches to her the long letters in which I write her news from her people at 'The Cedars.' She asks no questions and expresses no interest in aught else.

"I know you do not over-much admire Bradnor, but you will like him for his goodness to these dear children.

"Before this you will have seen Julia. Colonel Bradnor sent me a letter from her last month written in February; and Captain Hartley is also in Paris, Julia writes.

"All are there for Mai Hilton's marriage with the Duc de Rameaux. What a fit coronal the strawberry-leaves will make for that exquisite Greek brow!

"I intend to send you all the private and public news I can gather here to bribe you to write me full chapters of this marriage of 'Hagar's' daughter.

"Be sure to tell me of Lucy. Where is she, and how is she?

"But a truce to these questions, which show you how curious I am.

. . . . . .

"I will now give you my news.

"You know what good work the women of Richmond are doing in the hospitals, and that when needs at home press them most hardly. The general scarcity of everything is more felt here than in the country, where there are ways of patching up dinners as well as dresses.

"Charity here means more than giving; it means close, persistent denial of self to have something to give.

"I don't know why it is, but every time I return to Richmond, after even a short absence, life seems more earnest than elsewhere. In Mobile, for instance, there are all sorts of distractions, but here the family life is merged in the national life. Possibly it is the reflection of the heroic lives of the leaders which makes the difference. Possibly it is the result of the stately, dignified manners of these Virginian women, who have been always excellent managers, 'keepers at home,' 'looking well to the ways of their

households.' Now that life broadens, with anxieties shared, privations endured in common, these things affect society.

"Not that Richmond is melodramatic; on the contrary, it is exceedingly simple and natural. Human nature cannot breakfast, dine, and sup with griefs.

"There are moments when the very contrast of ills brings about the broadest farce. People have learned to laugh when they are hurt.

"There is always real pity and sympathy for the soldier in camp and hospital, but a civilian had better not tell his ailings; he will get scant hearing and scanter pity. If a clerk in a department complains of worn shoes and high prices somebody is sure to remark, 'Stonewall Jackson's men are barefoot,' and the poor fellow turns away ashamed of his slight grievance.

"As to the ladies' toilets, they are the queerest possible compound of ancient elegance and recent addition. Print dresses and point lace have come to dwell together in amity.

"You remember how careful Anne has always been of her *bettermost* things? Now she has no other than bettermost, all else being past wear; and so she is a model of the style which prevailed

the last year of the Union. She breakfasted out the other morning in a dress last worn in a Washington crush, looking like a faded fashion-plate.

"Dress is a consideration that begins to make itself felt. Blessed are they who can make or buy homespun! Mr. Davis has had a beautiful suit of jeans given him, and he wears it with evident pride.

"Miss Esmond gave an afternoon tea this week, and there was great fun telling the age and history of different garments.

"Anne Warrington came down late because her dress was too gorgeous for daylight. It was a yellow brocade petticoat, and for overdress a '*fly*' with broad stripes of white and blue with little bouquets of pink roses dotted here and there; the sleeves came to the elbow and finished with a heavy fall of old lace; the waist doubly-pointed. It had belonged to an ancestral great-grandaunt who was a colonial belle. With high-heeled slippers and her hair puffed over an old-fashioned comb, you may imagine how pretty Anne was. She looked so conscious and coquettish that everybody laughed when she began a little speech about her 'utter destitution and the straits to which she was reduced.'

"The fun all goes out of this when the movement of troops brings through the city men ragged and brown, hatless, and, last spring in the wild March weather, shoeless.

"The day after I reached here from Mobile there came through a regiment of the Stonewall brigade; not a dozen men in the command decently shod, and the day a drizzly sleet. The torn, battle-scarred flags were recognized, and women and children crowded the sidewalks. They gathered in knots of twos and threes, with little bursts of exclamation and sympathy. Finally, crowding together in the magnetism of common feeling, they made a rush for the head of the column, and the officers were begged to halt and let the men dine in the houses on each side, where hospitable doors were opened wide. The dinner was accepted, and women scattered to go home in haste and bring their best to the impromptu feast.

"There was a closer gathering of the crowd in the streets while the men were in the houses, and again women hurried about, stopping a moment at different doors, gathering contributions from the scanty supply of many a worn purse.

"In not much longer time than it takes to

write it every shoe-store in the town was cleared of its stock.

"Again about those homes where the men were the street was filled with women waiting till the dinner was finished, with its rare treat of *real* coffee. Then as the men came out they were told to come to a store at the corner and get shoes and socks.

"The bronzed, weather-beaten faces were aglow with thanks. A word was passed down the line, and after a short consultation a young lieutenant came with the answer: 'Ladies, we camped last night on the heights, at Camp Lee, with the new recruits. They are boys mostly, not inured to hardship, and the government has no shoes for them. Give them these. We are Stonewall Jackson's foot-cavalry, and we can fight best barefoot.'

"Who can tell how these women wept? Who will believe such men will fail to win?

"*Coyner's Springs, August* 10, 1863.—Anne and I were a week at the Yellow Sulphur, and then came here to this hottest of all valleys, where society is trying to get cool dancing nightly—'society' being wounded and convalescent soldiers, wives and daughters of officers

at the front, and semi-detached Senators and Congressmen with no visible constituency, for the blue-coats hold their precincts. We take rides in the country and find the people suffering great hardships, but bearing their ills bravely and patiently.

"Who will be found worthy to write the history of these Virginian women?

"Up the mountains one morning we stumbled over a family living in a double log-house with tumbled-down outhouses. There were three women and seven children, the gathered remnants of four families whose homes had been broken up near Fredericksburg. They were living on corn-bread and the milk of two cows, exchanging their butter for salt. Only the proceeds of a 'truck-patch' to depend on for the coming winter. No labor but their own and the feeble assistance, which was likely to grow into an encumbrance, of one old negro and his bent, rheumatic wife who had followed their broken fortunes.

"These were cultivated, gently nurtured women; two of them widows, made so by the war. The third had her husband, and the widows had two sons with Lee. To see these women work-

ing, and trying to feed the children and raise a little cotton ('a little cotton,' as they said, 'to make socks and shirts for our soldiers'), in faded, patched, worn dresses, with sunburned faces and roughened hands, was to me the most touching sight I have seen since the beginning of the war. What a mere nothing seemed all we could do compared to this unselfish, simple living through a life of toil, labor, and privation, without talking of sacrifice!

"How heartless seemed the dancers that night, how stupid the jokes of the overfed Senator.

"I sat in the wide piazza, self-condemned, convicted of wasted purpose, ready to be cross with any one who smiled, when there hobbled up a wounded captain of the Louisiana zouaves. Here was some one to be sorry for and sorry with. That tone fitted into the stormy feeling of the hour.

"How variable is human nature! A few minutes later the circle of listeners had widened and we were laughing heartily at the captain's story of the kid-gloved, patent-leather-footed zouaves' revolt from work in the trenches at Pensacola during the first summer of the war; and

how Bragg set their servants to digging and 'bucked' them into respect for discipline. And the wind-up—'he spoilt us as dandies, but he made soldiers of us'—brought thought back to the war again. We are never permitted to forget that long.

"*Augusta, Ga., September* 20, 1863.—We arrived here yesterday, the first stop since leaving Danville.

"This town seems an oasis of rest. I do not think they altogether realize the constant storm of battle in Virginia and Tennessee.

"In no other place have I seen so many civilians in the street.

"Georgia has suffered less than any of the other States.

"Augusta is the market for a comparatively rich agricultural country. It is beyond raids and has unbroken railroad connection with the South and East; consequently it is a desirable home for the families of the Kentucky soldiers either with Lee or Bragg, so Kentuckians congregate here.

"For the poorer refugees, like our friends 'up the mountain,' it is a haven beyond their means, the cost of coming, and the need of money to

live on, is too great. Poverty ties them to the soil of Virginia. But the Kentucky refugees are differently placed; they are comparatively rich, and the increased value of gold makes it cheap to live here if you have a gold basis.

"We had supper last evening with a family where we had all the luxuries that have grown into luxuries since the war.

"The house, up on the sand-hills, was large and airy. Our hostess showed us with pride a bed-room furnished with dry-goods boxes, showily draped with furniture print—altogether a pretty imitation of French hangings. She evidently expected compliment for her simplicity and economy. *We* were thinking of the waste of calico, *the 'little patch of cotton' to make 'shirts and socks for our soldiers,'* and the faded dresses of those Virginian gentlewomen.

"However, patriotism is not a synonym for poverty, and this lady proved her sincerity by being willing to suffer affliction (meaning dry-goods boxes) with the people of God for a season, provided the 'wind was tempered' to the thoroughbred 'shorn' of its cashmere fleece.

"Anything is better than the apathy of these Georgians. This assuredly does not apply to the

gallant soldiers who are in the Georgia regiments, but to the rich substitute-buyers—and their name is legion. Longstreet's corps brought away from Virginia when the need seems greatest there; Breckenridge and his homeless Kentuckians at the front, stubbornly opposing Rosecrans's advance; while here men sit in the shade and coolly discuss the chance of defeat!

"Our host has just come in with despatches: fighting near Chattanooga; Bragg's entire army engaged. Thank God that Longstreet is there with a corps of the Virginian army!

"*September* 22, 1863.—Another telegram brings news of victory. Rosecrans crushed and beaten back. All that are left of Longstreet's veterans are camped on the ground they have won. O my Virginians! my Virginians!

"*Selma, Ala., September* 24, 1863.—Tom Clay is dead! Poor boy! he will come no more in the cool, dewy twilight to talk of home and his far-away sweetheart. How she will grieve as the days go by and there are no more letters! The light of many a life goes out with 'no more letters.'"

CHAPTER XXXV.

"The catastrophe is a nuptial."

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Paris, June* 20, 1863.)

"'AN angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.' You give good gifts without mean or miserly reckoning. Your letters have all come to me, but where mine have gone only our meddlesome Paul Prys can tell; yet you will believe that I have written you often and full measure. Since the one sent from Canada by that faithful Kentucky courier none, it seems, have reached you.

"But I have good hope of this, and I shall not send it by way of Fortress Monroe or to your Cousin Bradnor's care. One L. Quintius Curtius—not of Rome but of rebeldom; one we both have known in better days, my dear—has promised it safe conduct. If he is but half so good a postal clerk as he is diplomatist, then I am sure my lady's hand will touch and my lady's eyes will read these lines.

"You can trust Bradnor if you like, but I will none of him. Although the dandy has sent me the first broken half of your letter safely and expeditiously, I hope part second is already *en route*. The fact of that letter's arrival proves it was never submitted to official inspection. Neither Stanton nor any creature made in his likeness would have passed so rebellious a document.

"What you write me of Rue grieves me. That a daughter of Stanislaus Leszinksky and Margaret Cartaret should suspect our want of faith or friendship denotes a morbid distrust of all humankind.

"Rue's intensity must border on insanity, or else her griefs have twisted her all awry.

"Had your letter come to me in time I would have humbled myself in the dust and begged a pass of Stanton. Had that failed I think 'Red-head' would have passed me through the lines at the cost of his commission. But when the letter did at last reach me we all thought it too late for me to go to 'The Cedars,' and Robert's letter clinched the thought. If Steenie were older and had lacked faith in me I would not have been astonished. But Rue?—why, I would as

soon have supposed Molly could be suspicious of the constancy of my affection for her! It has so hurt me that I have most bunglingly written her a letter of explanation—an explanation so ill made that she may find in it fresh cause of offence; and, in fact, my experience of life proves that words of excuse or apology never can cement broken faiths or friendships. There is no harder task than the dislodgment of suspicion. Its admittance beneath the roof of thought is proof of change in the host that harbors it.

"If my letter fails to bring Rue to wiser and better thinking, I shall either go to her when I return home or send an ambassador. We cannot quarrel with 'King Stan's' daughter nor permit her to believe evil things of us.

"This far the worst of it is, it has made Bradnor's attention welcome. Such a thing as a well-principled coxcomb may be possible, but I do not think Captain Hartley's relative is a specimen I should admit as that possibility. I look upon it as a great misfortune that he was Rue's helper when her father's sufferings made help needful. Julia has told me the condition attached to the fortune Simon Hartley left the fellow. Of course he is looking for an heiress with the re-

quisite amount. Rue's estate so largely exceeds the amount that his cupidity is doubly on the alert. He is a handsome animal, but, I confess it, I detest him. Not that I think his good looks would win Rue—I know her too well to believe that; but I know her so well that I know she will never forget or refuse payment for the kindness to her father. My only trust for her defence against such misplaced gratitude is in 'Red-head.'

"I think my beloved and most charmingly amiable son-in-law would break the dandy's neck were there no other method of breaking the match—which at last may be only 'a thing of imagination all compact.'

"To get rid of the subject I shall tell you news of the woman the dandy should marry. She is a feminine representative of the same species. I retract that, and but for blotting this letter would erase it. Mai Hilton is a heartless coquette, but in brains she is infinitely the superior of her distant cousin. (He is her cousin.) If I believed, my fair Katherine, that you had left anywhere about you a solitary particle of esteem or regard for the man whose wife you are so ill-advised as to permit yourself to be considered, I would write

nothing of Captain Hartley's visit here to his daughter or of his acknowledgment of her as his daughter, which he has made.

"I had better begin at the beginning and tell you all I know.

"I sailed from New York in February—not in March, as you supposed. My rebellious neighbors who used to live near me on 'the hill' have set up their household gods here in Paris—meaning ill-executed pictures of Lee and Jackson. They were constantly writing me invitations to visit them and see the shrine before which they burn waxen candles.

"I was doing no particular good at home. In fact, Carisbrooke gently hinted that I was busy the other way.

"I cannot truthfully say Carisbrooke was brutal, or even rude, in the manner of his suggestion. But he did manage to let me understand that the admirable frankness and wisdom with which I expressed my opinion of the conduct of the war was getting to be a damper upon the President. Close observers noticed that it was suppressing his anecdotal lore.

"Even in the flush of such victories as those of *Banks* and SCHENCK Mr. Lincoln would break

down in his second reminiscence. To the awe and consternation of the cabinet, he would suddenly stop after the familiar phrase, 'That reminds of a little story,' and go off on some serious tack quite foreign to the subject. You see *I* was the serious tack.

"Then, too, Stanton's sweet, babe-like sleep was broken—

> 'Sore labor's bath ;
> Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,'

was denied him, all a-cause of one woman.

" Yet I do not know that these particular national calamities would either have kept me silent or forced me to flee the country.

"But, like all great orators, Carisbrooke had reserved his climax. The peroration which brought me to Paris was that I was 'the insurmountable obstacle which had delayed "Red-head's" promotion.'

"To propitiate the 'Infernal Gods'—observe the capitals and the quotation-marks, and you will know that I am classical, not profane—I undertook this pilgrimage.

"Carisbrooke came with me to New York; from thence Lucy was my companion and atten-

dant, which is a partial answer to your inquiry. She is perfectly rational now, but her health is delicate; these two conditions made her coming with me advisable and induced Carisbrooke to give his consent. Privately she begged me to bring her. She knew Mai was here, and promised to be reasonable and discreet. Trusting to her promise, I brought her.

"Thus far she has kept her promise under peculiarly trying circumstances.

"We were both quite sea-sick, so I rested a week in London.

"Some English people we had entertained at Rosebank made it very pleasant for me. You are so joined to your idols that you will be glad to hear they were 'Southern sympathizers.' So it happened at a swell dinner they gave I met most of the notable rebels then in London: the Masons, of course, and with them the noble envoy —refused at St. Petersburg—who sends you this. I heard that night a very pretty compliment to him which I think will please you.

"A bright woman, who belongs to a family distinguished as *diplomats*, said, as L. Quintius Curtius moved away from the little group: 'That young man is wonderfully clever. He is

the brightest diplomatist I have ever met from America. He understands what the other men you have sent here have never learned—the value of women as allies, and that they have a certain social influence in politics which is especially effectual in influencing the public reception of new questions. He is free from the pettiness of masculine vanity which would either underrate or be indifferent to that influence. If he was the senior and leader of the commissioners I think he would win the recognition they ask.'

"The day after this dinner I left London on the tidal train for Paris. I had taken a first-class ticket for Lucy, that I might have her with me. We were alone in the railway carriage, and the guard was about to lock the door, when I heard some one say, 'Mrs. Carisbrooke.' As I looked around our 'envoy' was asking permission to enter with a friend. It was given on the instant, and as number one took the place opposite to me I saw that number two was Captain Hartley. The greeting and the perfunctory inquiries were exceedingly awkward, for he had recognized Lucy, who was in the next seat to mine. Fortunately, the 'envoy' was in one of his brilliantly talkative moods, and I was only too willing to listen

without interruption, except when it was needful to touch a new key that there might be no stop. On the packet we saw nothing of Captain Hartley, nor did we from Calais to Paris. His companion reported him in a smoking-carriage.

"Thus the trial of Lucy's 'reasonable' and 'discreet' promise was made before we reached Paris. I could see she was of an ashen color; further than that she gave no evidence of remembrance or recognition.

"I was so sure the meeting with Hartley would prevent my seeing Mai that I was surprised beyond measure when, two days after I was settled in the little apartment taken for me by my friends, the *concierge* came up with a card: 'The lady was waiting in her carriage to hear if I was disengaged and would receive her.' The card was engraved 'Miss Hartley-Hilton.'

"I bade the man show the lady up.

"The second-sight of the Scotch wizard is a mere nothing to the clairvoyance of a mother. Lucy could not understand what had been said, and she had not seen the card; but, with a rapid glance at the trembling figure leaning against the mantelpiece, I comprehended her look of expectancy.

"Affecting a confidence I was far from feeling, I bade her wait in my room, saying: 'If you are sure of yourself, sure you will not come where Mai can see you, you may leave the door ajar so you can both see and hear.' She kissed my hand with a most grateful look of thanks, which also was a look of promise.

"'Miss Hartley-Hilton' was announced in such fashion that the name was not recognizable.

"My dear Kate! we all always thought her beautiful. Well, the bud was nothing to the flower. All the visions of beautiful women that I have had, in and out of the flesh, were as nothing to this goddess. How well the Parisians have named her!

"She gave me no time for mere perfunctory civilities. A cannon-ball sent by your famous young Pelham could not have more plumply fallen into the middle of things.

"'My father told me that you were here, Mrs. Carisbrooke. He urged the fact as a reason for my leaving Paris immediately—we are going to Rome for Easter—but the reason he gave for avoidance is the reason that brought me here. The woman Lucy—my mother—is with you?'

"'Yes, she is with me.'

"'Why did she come? Or rather, why did you bring her? Was it to see me, to make any claim upon me? Did you know that I was about to be married to the Duc de Rameaux?'

"'Yes, I knew it.'

"'Then that is why you brought her?'

"'Yes, that she might see you married.'

"'I know. You are Mrs. Hartley's friend. You wish to punish me for my father's recognition of me as his daughter. That is why you brought the woman, my mother—she is my mother; I do not and shall not deny that fact. I came to ask what she and you expect from me. What does she demand?'

"'She demands from you—nothing. It is what you have given her since you knew you had a mother living. Your father has given her less and more: when her youth was prematurely withered and her beauty had faded he took you from her and gave her another master.'

"'Did he not free her?'

"'Yes, after she had escaped and disgrace threatened him.'

"'He says that he believed she was dead.'

"'The wish was father to the thought.'

"'If she asks nothing, expects nothing, why is she here, and what interest has she in my marriage?'

"'She has the heart of a mother, the devotion of a mother. Neglected, denied, despised, twice driven to insanity, the first effort of recovered reason, the first question that frames itself to her returning sense, is for her child. She is content to live outside of your life, but the very breath of life to her is assurance of your safety, of your happiness. She only wished to look upon the face of her child, to see the husband into whose hands her child's happiness is to be trusted. She does not ask or wish you to look upon her. She demands neither love nor recognition. And for her I demand nothing, except that at a safe distance from your splendor, in some retired corner where her presence may not be noticed, she shall see you married. She is so single-thoughted in her devotion to you that your marriage is everything to her. She has been a slave, but she is a loving woman. Her faults came from poison in the blood, from the degradation of one race and the sin of another. Her first and only wish in life is to see her daughter lifted above danger of temptation. To her

your marriage seems a very ark of safety. Now you know her demands. I can assure you that in no way will she compromise your future. In my household she is loved and respected. Her home is with us. In the last interview she had with you, the last she ever will have, she mutely promised to make no claim to any place in your life or your affection. She has kept and she will keep the promise. But when I see her in pain through the yearning desire of a mother to look upon the child she carried next her heart, I will bring her where, unknown to your world, she may look upon your face.'

"'Mrs. Carisbrooke, do you think I do not pity her? Ah! you do not know that through this marriage I repay Captain Hartley what she has suffered. Because of this alliance, which reflects a certain distinction upon the son of a petty tradesman, heir of Simon Hartley the miser, Captain Hartley has given me the right to bear his name and will pay the *dot* a ducal house requires. I assure you it is no slight sacrifice he makes. He has had losses in the last few years, and I have never measured or restricted my expenditures since I knew what debt I owed him through my mother. Ah! madame, he has paid

dearly for what I learned at Rosebank. And now it takes the greater part of his fortune to balance my tainted blood against the honors, and dignities, and virtues of the Duc de Rameaux.'

"I can tell you the words, Kate, but I cannot show you the scorn that flashed from the beautiful violet eyes. I had heard a noise from my bed-room and I was anxious to end the interview. Miss Hartley-Hilton ended it by saying:

"'If your friend Mrs. Hartley—she was always kind to me, and I am grateful—wishes, she can easily prove the story false which Captain Hartley told at the legation here when the marriage settlements were drawn. He said that he had been secretly married to my mother, who died at my birth. The Duc de Rameaux has heard the truth; I told it to him. He knows the stain and accepts it with me—and a *dot*. I will send you cards for yourself and your *friend* to see me married. Good-morning.' And she was gone.

"She has Hartley eyes, but she has the daring courage of her grandfather, the gambler. She plays her stakes as recklessly and is willing to stand the hazard of the die. When she left me I was in doubt which most to applaud, her beauty and grace or her rash, determined spirit. But

for all that I thanked the gods no one I loved was in the position of the Duc de Rameaux.

"The next day I heard that Mrs. Cartaret and the Hartleys had gone to Rome. The Duc de Rameaux followed them.

"The week after Easter I received cards (one left blank) for the marriage ceremony, which was to be celebrated at the American Chapel. I took Lucy to a quiet corner in the gallery. Kneeling there, she watched her child. The tears that fell from those soft, brooding eyes, and which rolled unheeded over the thin, wasted face, mutely pleaded for forgiveness of her sin and for the happiness of her child. That sad look of apprehension which used to be ever present in her countenance has gone. The long-drawn sighs that come at regular intervals from the quiet corner in which she chooses to work are all that tell of past griefs.

"The morning after the marriage the Duc and Duchesse de Rameaux left for their château in Touraine.

"Next week we go to Switzerland with our friends, and later to the English lakes. I will write you again when we get to London, where I hope to find letters from you."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from the plantation near Selma, October* 7, 1863.)

"My dear Mrs. Carisbrooke: At last a letter from you. It followed me from Richmond, passed me *en route*, went on to Mobile, and yesterday your brother Robert brought it back here.

"Thanks for your compliance with my wish. This despatch of yours is a news-letter. But in one way it will not have the effect you anticipate.

"I will never carry my troubles into a divorce court. And if Captain Hartley wishes to I do not think he can find cause for divorce. The bonds of relationship often grow painful, but we do not break them for that. We simply endure such ills as we best may. If I were dying of a cancer I should not tear away the coverings to show it to all the world. I shall certainly never uncover to the multitude my private grief. I knew what your letter meant, for I have heard you talk all this *at* me—never unkindly, but because of the loving-kindness of your motive it has always touched me nearly. Now I beg as a favor that it may rest, silenced by your regards for my—call them, if you like—prejudices.

"I am glad Mai was recognized by her father. It is the most manly and human thing I have ever known of him. I could not make that a cause of quarrel, had I wanted one.

"I am sincerely glad of Lucy's improvement. She has been a sore spot in my conscience for years. If there is ever anything that I may be permitted to do for her, the doing it will be a pleasure and a favor to me. Had I been gentler in speech and temper that first summer of my stay at Oakhill, if anger had not blinded all sense of justice, that poor mother's life might not have been altogether one of suffering.

"It is difficult for Sarah to pity Hagar, to think of her as a victim.

"I am heartily glad of Mai's good-fortune—if it is good-fortune. What do you know or hear of the man she has married?

"I have news to tell that you will be sorry to hear. With your letter yesterday Mr. Robert Carisbrooke brought me others. One was from Rue and one from Colonel Bradnor. Each announced their engagement to the other, and both the letters were short, stiff, and ceremonious.

"O Mrs. Carisbrooke! what can we do? I am sure there will be no love in this marriage. I

pray something may happen to break it. Surely, surely Stanislaus Leszinksky's daughter will be saved from such misery!

"The only loophole of escape that I see is that it is to be a long engagement. They are 'not to be married until Steenie comes of age.' Thank Heaven for that!

"General Roane and two of his staff have just arrived. They are on their way to the trans-Mississippi department. General Roane is to join Sterling Price. We will not see him again until the war ends. And as yet who can prophesy when that will be?

"But I must say good-by. General Roane will take this and the longer letter which I have kept waiting opportunity, and send them through Memphis. He tells me his old friend General Forrest has a safe private mail route through the city. Always yours,

"KATE."

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Rosebank, April* 3, 1864.)

"MY DEAR KATE: General Forrest's mail route was safe but very slow. I do not know how he managed it, but the letter came to Cincinnati by

private hands just after Forrest's fight at Okalona, where, in the classic language of *our* great leader of a 'movable column,' 'half our cavalry went to h— and half to Memphis.'

"But I dare not say another such word. I have promised Carson—who is now here for a day, and who says he will see this sent to you by a quicker post than yours—to give no news that can in any way be construed as military information. And even that pious hint *as to the direction taken by the Federal cavalry* might give 'aid and comfort to the enemy,' which means *you*, my dear. Being thus basely restricted in my endeavor to write history, I will tell you all the scandal I know. (If it was not for the military restriction I could tell things that would 'murder sleep' and make a 'fretful porcupine' of you. What a pity I am bound to silence!) Not being free to tell military news (or scandal), I shall go out of the country for my items.

"Rue answered my 'explanation,' but in a very high and mighty way, which was not encouraging to fresh epistolary effort. Being a resolute, persistent woman, I would not give it up. Two weeks after I returned from abroad, which was in January, I faced the arctic tempe-

rature of Montreal to see her majesty. But her royal courtesy was as cold as the climate. Not being amiable beyond measure, I made one or two observations that had probably better have been left unsaid. I had heard through Mrs. Cartaret of the Bradnor engagement, and I was witless enough to characterize him as a fool and a fortune-hunter, which was in no sense wise in me. Rue is not altogether above the womanly weakness of counting on her own attractions, and her craze is devotion where she is, or feels she ought to be, attached.

"Thus at double points I angered her, and the longer I kept at it the less I bettered it. The upshot was, I started home the next day with a very positive impression that things were as badly muddled and as much out of joint as I could get them. Then Molly wrote Rue a most peace-provoking letter. She had the grace to answer Molly's civilly. 'Red-head' and Molly are going to Montreal as soon as 'Red-head' can be spared—but this touches the forbidden. 'Red-head' is the very cream and color of military intelligence.

"Before I am wrecked let me try another tack.

"Molly has a daughter, born in the blustering

month of March. And her name is Margaret Leszinksky, at which I am pleased, although it is a decided snub to my lovely name, of which I am daily growing more enamored, as Virginia—there I go again! That tack was a failure.

"This time I shall get out of the country, and keep out.

"The beautiful young Duchesse de Rameaux has not only been duly presented to the imperial majesties, but she has a place at court. That far all sounds like joyful-ringing marriage-bells, but sinister undertones come over the sea. The duc lost heavily last summer on the turf, and baccarat did not lighten his losses. Neither did a certain actress who wears ducal diamonds. Rumor says the *dot* which the duchesse brought him has been squandered, and that his generous and amiable father-in-law was 'done' in the transaction. The estates upon which old Simon Hartley's dollars were supposed to be secured have already upon them two generations of mortgages.

"It seems the only person this disturbs is Captain Hartley. The young duchesse neither moans nor retrenches. Her wardrobe is the glory of Worth and the marvel and the admi-

ration of Paris. Some one is pinched! Carisbrooke heard accidentally that Hartley had telegraphed to order the sale of certain stock; and when his broker delayed, and explained that it would be a great loss, the order was made peremptory. The old miser's millions are sliding the way millions are said to do when the majesty from the bottomless pit has gathered them.

"The mills go on grinding slowly. Hartley may be ruined through his love for Lucy's daughter. I would not have believed his affection would ever have led him to self-sacrifice.

"Sometimes, when I remember what Mai said to me of the price her marriage would cost her father, I fancy she intended his ruin. She said she would 'repay her mother's debt.'

"Larry Hoyt's settlement of such a debt, had he promised settlement, would have been quick and sure, but frankly and openly risked. I fear the gambler's blood has been corrupted by the Hartley strain; or it may be the outcome of some Voudoo witch who worked her evil will through hidden and deadly mysteries ages ago where the Nile spring bubbles into life.

"What a puzzling psychological study can be drawn out of a blood-puddle!

"If I were a psychomancist, to define the beautiful duchesse I would call up the Voudoo witch. I am sure the witch is in the majority. She counts for more than the gambler.

"The Hartley part goes for naught. It is only dirt. But then that conclusion sets one off on a new search. Julia has loyal and true and honest qualities. Pshaw! Julia is the reproduction of some remote accident. Like Mai, she is the mystic product of past ages.

"There must be a subtle, transmissible essence in blood that, under certain conjunctions, is procreative of qualities. Why else should it flow smoothly for generations and then suddenly develop a new species?

"Here are three examples ready for your study:

"No. 1. RUE—*Homerically heroic, princely in faults—an evident skip from the middle ages.*

"No. 2. JULIA—*A reproduction of germs of intelligence and feeling which were buried in the dirt beneath the Hartley animalism.*

"No. 3. MAI—*A goddess. Evolved from a witch, has she a human soul?*

"If your head aches with the reading, what

do you suppose I have suffered while giving birth to these children of an addled brain?

"April as it is, we still have fires. Lucy is sitting close beside mine, mending Carisbrooke's favorite coat.

"I would wager she is thinking of her daughter; what a true, womanly poor woman she is! It is the *fact*, not the grandeur, of her daughter's marriage that touches her. Lucy must have had some blind, indefinable fear that Mai's fate might resemble her own. Release from that fear has brought her peace. Sometimes at her work—which she seems to hold to as a safeguard to reason—I hear her softly singing that sweet old hymn, 'Abide with me.' I remember it was a favorite with Margaret Leszinksky.

"I know now where the duchesse got that wonderful musical intuition and clear, bird-like voice.

"I think Lucy entirely cured; but Carisbrooke looks grave when I ask his opinion, and then hopes that 'no sudden shock will disturb the balance.'

"If there is bad news from Mai I must keep it from Lucy. And that will be difficult. She is

greatly changed from the old apathetic manner. She is acutely sensitive to mention of Mai—sensitive and watchful. I think she catches and understands every allusion that is made. She is still devoted to Molly, and even more devoted to Molly's children, but she has lost the old insane belief in her ownership of all children who are ill.

"I know now where she spent the long months when she left us. She was in the country near New York with the O'Dowds, occasionally going to Philadelphia—watching the house where her child lived for a chance view of her lost treasure. That was why she saved money. Now that her natural characteristics appear, she is the most generous person I have ever known. The little income your cousin Margaret settled upon her, and all her earnings, are given to the poor. Her services are free to all she can aid with service. She was constantly sitting up with poor invalids here on the hill and in the city, until Carisbrooke insisted that she should not do so without his permission. And now she importunes him until he is sometimes worried into consent.

"I have told all the news except that which is

'contraband'; and of course the forbidden is what I most want to say.

"But you can write full letters. And I trust in you to hear from our—from the unrepentant rebels."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Fierce and clear is the scabbard's ring,
With the sharp sword for guest;
But the whirl of the downward swing
Of that blue blade is best.

"And the tramp of a thousand steeds
In thunder and clouds,
When the earth is shaken and bleeds,
Maketh a man's heart proud—

"More proud than words ever said
Or songs ever sung!
And proudest the hearts, fever-fed,
Of the brave and the young."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Mobile, February*, 1865.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: No letters from you since one written last April which General Carson sent through by an officer who was exchanged. I wrote you in May and sent the letter to Memphis. I fear you did not get it. But I am writing this in broken bits and will send it when occasion favors me. Mrs. Robert Carisbrooke has gone to Selma, or rather to the plantation, and I am staying with my old

friend and schoolmate, Sue Burton, who married a classmate of Dr. Carisbrooke's. I am perfectly at home in this hospitable house, and delighted to escape our chilly, rainy Virginia spring.

"*February* 10.—What a day and what a climate!

"'Soft o'er beds of violets zephyr steals.'

I have sat at my work all the morning with windows and doors wide open.

"This afternoon numberless callers and interruptions. At six a drive down the bay with three Mobile ladies.

"We looked across the water to where the Yankee ships were anchored, while listening to a story that proved the value of a bad reputation. A short time since a party of Yankees from a gunboat landed at a plantation at the very time the mistress (who resides in Mobile on account of their proximity) was at home getting supplies to take back to the city. She resisted as far as words would go; they insisted without words; and the transfer of edibles from her wagon to their boat was quickly made. Having nothing left but temper, she threw it at them in taunts;

"'Why do you not fight our men? Come to Mobile and take the city. You have been three years anchored in the bay, and this is your first conquest.'

"'Yes, madam,' said the blue-coat very gravely. 'You are perfectly right in your reckoning of time; could not have done it better myself—just three years and some days over. All that time Mobile has been full of gold-laced rebels [a different breed from the ragged Virginians], and it has been the principal business of you ladies utterly to spoil them as soldiers. It is a notorious fact that the rebel government is constantly forced to change the troops there, but they can't do it fast enough to keep up the *moralé*. When they go back Bragg swears, and Lee puts them in front of the Stonewall brigade with bayonet points in their suspender-crossings. Yes, madam, you are right: over three years have passed, and we would rather not have Mobile. Keep your Capua.'

"We all laugh rather ruefully, and fear there is a little justice in this hit.

"Going home, we stopped at Colonel Forsyth's to ask the news from Virginia. News of the saddest—Lee begging for recruits and provisions;

none and nothing to send him. To-morrow night a meeting here to try what can be done.

"*March*, 1865.—I don't believe Mobile can help being gay and bright, no matter what current of grief sweeps through the national life. This is partly climatic. With such air, pure, soft, violet-odored, life brightens into happy bits. Naples laughs though Vesuvius threatens. And Mobile is a lesser Naples, lazzaroni and all. If you doubt it come and go down to the shore and count the turbaned heads that sleep in the sun as they wait for those lazy fishermen

"'Who rock in their boats on the bay.'

"There is surely a Congress of Beauty in Mobile this winter: Mobilians of every type, some fair as Helen and as—s-t-o-p i-t; no scandal, if you please; others (than Helen) sweet, pure, and grandly beautiful; brunettes that outflash Mohammed's houris; blondes fit to wait on the heroes in Valhalla; some who would match your Parisian 'goddess.' I will not write names, but I will say that this winter I lived in the house with Aphrodite—not that no-*saint* who floated out of the sea-foam, but a product of Kentucky. Even 'Macaria' raved of her beauty in five-syllabled

dithyrambics. Under the rose I would say that Aphrodite is not a wise goddess—but then a woman so magnificently beautiful does enough for her race when she lets them look at her.

"*April* 8, 1865.—There are the most unexpected *rencontres* here. Society seems a magician's table, where you do not know what may chance next. You have an engagement to ride in the morning with a friend; he comes with 'Care on the crupper' to make his excuses—he is going to the front with despatches. You are to dine with another; a messenger comes to say the family have gone to the plantation, for a Yankee raid has just swept through and they must know how the children, left with servants, have fared. You are invited to a *quiet* tea with a third; six to one you go in your second-best dress (you only have two) and meet all the people of your circle in their uniform and well-worn evening costume.

"Yesterday the ladies of the household were in the parlor receiving Albert G—— and his bride (people still give and are given in marriage, though the wedding march is thrilled through with cannon-shot), when Colonel Shirley, my old neighbor at Belleview, was announced—in town for the day, on his way to Price's command,

which confronts Banks on the Red River. Another ring at the door: Judge W——, of Memphis, whom the fate of war has brought here. His oldest son was killed in the first year of the war; the youngest, a mere lad, has taken his dead brother's place. Destiny's kaleidoscope shakes father and son together in our drawing-room.

"Society has quieted into a daily expectancy; there is no possibility of settling to anything. We can only wait. What feasts are made are to feed hungry soldiers, though there are shadowy spectres at every banquet 'that push us from our stools.'

"To-day there is constant fighting over the bay at Blakely and Spanish Fort. General Liddell is in command at Blakely; with him the brave remnant of a Missouri brigade just exchanged from a Yankee prison in time to fight in this hopeless defence.

"Mobile's mothers' darlings are there, too, playing soldier in earnest: nine hundred of the Mobile cadets, boys from fourteen to seventeen—'old enough,' as their boy leader said, 'to die for the country'! There, too, are the Home Guard—men from forty-five to sixty-five.

"At Spanish Fort, Gibson, with eight hundred men and the Washington artillery, resists the pressure of Canby's column, which is seventy-five thousand strong and has thirty-six batteries in place and three gunboats in the offing. Thermopylæ had not greater odds!

"This unrest drives to extremes, so Mrs. Benedict and I have volunteered to go to-night with the hospital-boat which takes supplies and brings back the wounded.

"*April* 9.—At nine o'clock last night we left the wharf—three gentlemen, two ladies, and the ship's crew. At ten we reached Blakely. There we landed supplies; then our shadowy ship crept silently down the river past the enemy's batteries, landing without accident under the guns of Spanish Fort.

"Then came the danger. The Federals were making a night attack. Shrieking shells burst above us into shattered lights, hot shot crossed the sky like blazing meteors — from every point of the compass there speeded lightning-flashes of flame. From the batteries around those doomed earthworks, and from down the bay where the sullen gunboats belched forth fire and shot, there were sheets of light. The enemy

had caught sight of our sails and through the cordage their balls came thick and fast.

"All this time men were busy bringing the wounded on board and taking provisions ashore.

"Their sharpshooters got our range, and now to all that infernal clatter was added the quick, rain-like pattering of minie-bullets on the deck. Men were killed bringing on the wounded; wounded men were killed as they were brought aboard.

"Another danger was added—General Gibson had decided to evacuate the place. For weeks they had held it through a constant storm of battle. These worn-out men could do no more; but the ammunition, so scarce and so precious, must be saved, so it was piled on the deck between rows of wounded men. Let one shot strike there and the ship and its living freight must go down. But—

> "'Stormed at by shot and shell,
> . . . . . .
> Out of the gates of death,
> Out of the mouth of hell,'

we safely passed the river-batteries.

"At Blakely we stopped and gathered fresh swaths of the battle harvest—more wounded and

one dead boy. Men were buried where they fell, but the boy must be sent to his waiting mother.

"We landed at Mobile in the bright April morning, and there on the wharf the mothers of the cadets were waiting for news. They all pressed forward as the corpse was brought off, to see whose was the loss. Only fifteen years old, shot through the forehead, the blue eyes open, and the yellow hair dabbled in blood! The only son of a poor Scotch widow—that 'fair-haired laddie.' His father was killed at Vicksburg. The mother's soul seemed to go from her in a low, sad wail as she clasped her dead boy in her arms.

"In the afternoon the silence across the bay told us that Blakely was taken. A boat brought over the few who escaped, and the story was told how men were shot down after the surrender. Then, too, we heard how, in the moment of a successful escape, Cockerell was told how his men were being murdered, and from the gun-boat which he had reached in safety he swam back to stop the massacre or share the fate of his comrades.

"I have tried to picture this semi-military life, its joys, its sorrows; how it laughed in the sun-

shine, how the storm broke it to fragments. And yet, unless you had lived through it all, you would not know what treasure lies buried beneath its ruins.

"*April* 13.—Yesterday Mobile surrendered to the foe. They tell us Lee has surrendered. I do not believe them. The British consul promised to send you this letter. When I can I shall go to Virginia. To think what we have all suffered in vain!"

BOOK THIRD.

PART SECOND.

"IPSO JURE."

"For I tell you the great baize will soon fall down. Have I had any secrets from you all through the piece? I tell you the house will be empty and you will be in the cold air. When the boxes have got their nightgowns on, and you are all gone, and I have turned off the gas and am in the empty theatre alone in the darkness, I promise you I shall not be merry."—THACKERAY.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day."

JUDGE CARTARET'S management of "the great Cartaret estate" during Margaret's minority; his judicious investment of its yearly revenues in lands in and near Chicago and St. Louis, followed as it was by Rue's long minority; and Mr. Robert Carisbrooke's prudent improvement of these lots and lands, had more

than quadrupled the sum total before the beginning of the civil war.

Bradnor, who was disposed to watch his interests carefully, had gone directly to "The Cedars" as soon as the Federal forces invested Richmond. Although he had resigned his command at the time of his engagement to Rue, he had sufficient interest at headquarters to get a guard detailed from the brigade to which he had belonged, and consequently the only loss the estate had suffered was in its available working force; outside of the lands surrounding the house the plantation was an immense pasture-field.

Late in the fall of 1865 Rue and Steenie returned from Canada. All of the "Mason negroes" except Solomon—who was rapidly laying the foundation for his later rise to political importance in North Carolina—and several families of the Cartaret people were at "The Cedars" when the sisters returned.

According to the provision of her grandfather's will, Rue, having attained her majority, was given full control of the income of her estate, although the landed capital was yet in the hands of her trustees, one being Mr. Robert Ca-

risbrooke, and the other General Carson, who was also Steenie's guardian.

The hospitality of "The Cedars" was as unrestricted as in the old days. The Chicago property was paying large interests, and the young mistress of the old house was as generously lavish in expenditure as had been her ancestor, the princely and prodigal Palatine.

Miss Esmond's home had been lost in the flames of Richmond. At the time of Rue's return Mrs. Hartley, Miss Esmond, and Anne Warrington—the victims of three conflagrations —were living together in a small rented house in Danville. Mrs. Hartley's Rose, Miss Esmond's old cook, and the ancient white-headed butler from Castlewood completed the establishment, which was supported by the scanty remittances gathered by the head man from the negro tenants at Belleview.

Harry Warrington was killed during the defence of Richmond, and the Warrington place on the Rappahannock was a deserted ruin.

Small as was Mrs. Hartley's income, it was the sole resource of the household. And even to supply the wants of her friends she would not confess her poverty or ask aid of Captain Hart-

ley, who at rare intervals wrote ceremonious notes of inquiry and ceremonious offers of service. To Mrs. Cartaret she simply explained the situation of her friends, and made their situation her reason for staying in Virginia when the suggestion was made that she should go to Oakhill. The only help that did come was in the form of rich and expensive Parisian toilets from Mrs. Cartaret, which were sold in Richmond when the needs of the household were greatest. From the dressmaker who was trusted to make these sales Rue learned where her cousin was staying and something of her cousin's need.

Steenie and the governess who had come with them from Montreal had driven to town in the Cartaret coach with the Cartaret heiress. The carriage left the sisters and their chaperone at the Exchange Hotel and went back empty, but the coachman carried an order to "The Cedars" to have the house prepared for a large party of visitors, and Oscar was requested to bring Mammy Sara and some luggage that was needed that night to the hotel. The orders were promptly obeyed.

Leaving Steenie, the governess, and maid to await her return at the Exchange, Rue, with Os-

car as travelling attendant, started to Danville in the early morning train.

From this expedition the "Princess" came back in triumph. After a hard-fought battle with Miss Esmond she captured the entire household. The third day the three ladies returned with Rue; and before another week their effects followed in charge of the colored detachment, commanded by Oscar.

From that day Rue made a voluntary renunciation of her sovereignty. The homeless and penniless spinster was the high court of appeal at "The Cedars." All household questions were referred to her, and Rue was simply the first of her subjects. Until her death, which happened two years later, Miss Esmond was firmly convinced that it would be impossible for the sisters to reside at "The Cedars" without the protection of her presence. Mrs. Hartley and Anne Warrington were installed as counsellors. The womanly side of Rue's character was never so beautifully shown as in the respectful and deferential manner with which she treated these guests, and the tenacity with which she exacted for them alike respect from all of her household. The Montreal governess was dismissed for an

ill-tempered argument with Miss Esmond; and the only time Rue ever spoke with even a tone of reproof to Steenie was for a childish impertinence ventured in her governess's defence.

The Hartleys still stayed abroad. Mrs. Cartaret's letters were all about her niece—she now openly called Mai her niece.

The Hartleys had taken an apartment on the Champs Elysées. In the winter the letters were of diplomatic and imperial balls and dinners, of evenings at the opera and receptions in *the Faubourg*—for the Rameaux were of the old nobility. Then vintage scenes were photographed from the château in Touraine. There were short trips in the spring to Italy; summer junketings in the Alpine country; Bohemian frolics in the Tyrol; and rhapsodies of written delight from the Rhineland.

Mrs. Cartaret had found that revival of youth, that wonderful Indian summer, which regilds the life of women in France, and so she let herself float with the current. She had eaten the leaves of the lotus "compliment" until she was drunk with the subtle essence of that penetrative aroma, which creeps to the brain and fills life with the sensuous breathing of the self-flattery which

it awakens. The moral consciousness was lost in this lethargy of soul and intellect, and the painful spectacle was presented of their entire subjugation to physical suggestion and impression.

Mrs. Carisbrooke would have defined it as a going back into the "Hartley animalism," a lapse, or rather a loss, of that more "remote accident" of ancestorship which had lifted Julia out of the direct Hartley line.

Whatever it was, the change had been accomplished. Mrs. Carisbrooke would have seized and defined the fact. Kate only felt it. But the feeling was enough. It was the first loosening of the old influence her sister-in-law had held in her life. Every fresh letter from Paris was further detachment.

In loosening the past Kate had gained strength for the future—strength and insight; and the dawning of insight is the dawning of wisdom. She saw clearly the wrong she had done herself in following the world's ruling. She, too, had flattered herself with delusions; only her delusions had been built into a stately fabric, which she had called *self-renunciation.* But that self-renunciation was neither for God's sake nor for

humanity's sake. It was only a compromise with the powers and principalities that are embodied in that pregnant evil called the world.

Her veiled separation had enforced upon her not only a thousand petty hypocrisies but a false and barren life. It had hardened Hartley into a criminal, and brought Hagar to madness before it brought her to repentance.

Kate knew now that she should have let no persuasion sway her, no cowardly fear of the world's opinion persuade her to a lie. Had she loved the sinner while hating the sin the wound must have healed. But the failure in forgiveness taught her the mistake which had maimed her life. It was not the faithlessness of another, but her own lack of love. She was learning painfully that great heart-truth which is the last lesson wisdom teaches the feelings—that to be loved is nothing, but to love is everything!

Not in receiving but in giving is the soul filled with light and lifted heavenward.

Kate's first enlightenment had come through her meeting with Leszinksky. Fortunately for her, it had come before the turning-point in her life had been reached. Her own miserable failure had blinded her to the heavenly possibilities

of love. Pride, which is the first of human as love is of divine qualities, had saved her from the abandonment of her personal dignity. But the concealed separation forced falsehood into every action of the daily life which was itself a lie.

In such an existence one of two terminations is inevitable, unless the mortal tie should break. If a strong temptation comes and the devil Opportunity stands by, the stained soul sinks to the lowest level; or if temptation is absent, or resisted only through base fear of the world, fold by fold the soul is encased in the cerements that preserve its stains and make them immortal.

Leszinksky's love for her cousin, which had conquered death in waiting trustfully for the last and perfect reunion, was a revelation to the woman whose first awakening was a passionate and selfish impulse. As I have said, it was the revelation of a new gospel. Its first effect was conviction of sin. Its second was the strengthening of the higher pride. Then through slow processes came the gradual sloughing off of falsehood. The small daily deceits of her life were dropped. Those who stood behind the curtain when the actress made her entrances and exits upon the world's stage saw the dropping of de-

ceptions. Then, after Leszinksky's death, shams were set aside and the long-delayed battle with the world was accepted.

It was the end of all the false things in her life; from that moment she determined that no persuasion, no worldly reasoning should ever again prevail with her, should ever win her back to a mere show and pretence of marriage. "For Julia's sake"—Julia had not then lost her influence—"for Julia's sake I will not take the world into my confidence; for her sake, and for the sake of the Cartaret name, I will not go into a divorce court. But I will act no more untruths; I will live my life entirely apart from her brother, and as I think life ought to be lived."

This thought was ruling her when suddenly in the summer of 1867 Mrs. Cartaret arrived at "The Cedars."

There were other guests there—Dr. and Mrs. Carisbrooke, Molly and her children.

Carson had made a day's visit to "The Cedars" during the previous winter, when Rue's chilliness had partially thawed.

In the spring Miss Esmond's health began to fail, and once or twice she expressed a wish to

see Dr. Carisbrooke. Rue commenced a ceremonious letter of invitation; happening to look up from her writing, she saw her father's sword hanging above an old sabre of Carson's which had been broken in that desperate fight at Bouie's Hill, and which she had kept and brought to "The Cedars" with her treasures. Her father had hung it where it now was. The thought of her father, which had heretofore embittered her when she recollected the anguish in his face at the last hour of his life and the look of search for the absent, now softened her feeling.

The broken sword conquered a peace.

A cordially-written invitation brought all the family from Rosebank, glad, eager to show their gladness at the return of the old-time kindliness. Carson had come, too, but now he was at West Point. In a day or two he would return, and with him "King Stan's" godson.

Dr. Carisbrooke had advised the seashore for Miss Esmond and for Steenie, who had been delicate and strangely despondent all summer. Rue and Dr. Carisbrooke went with the invalids to Cape May. They left them there with Anne Warrington and Mammy Sara as guards and care-takers. Rue had offered to excuse

herself to her guests and stay with her sister, but Steenie had insisted that Rue should leave them.

Rue rather reluctantly admitted the truth of Steenie's last argument.

"You will spoil me, sister, and you are over-careful and anxious; I think that is one reason I am so nervous. Please leave me with Miss Esmond and Anne. I cannot tell why it is, but your manner, your constant watchfulness, excites me; I am better alone."

So the older sister uttered no further word of objection to her dismissal.

The day after the doctor and Rue returned Carson came without his son. The young cadet had stopped to make a short stay with a comrade who lived in Philadelphia. That afternoon Mrs. Cartaret drove out from Richmond.

She had just arrived from Paris, but she "could not stay"—not even that night. "There were business matters of moment awaiting her return to Washington. She came to take Kate back with her." Such were her answers to Rue's hospitable urging.

The sisters-in-law were left together, and Mrs. Cartaret's explanation grew more definite. Her

brother had come with her. Oakhill was sold and Kate's signature was needed.

There were also other deeds to be signed in which her right of dower must be relinquished. At first Kate refused to go, at which Julia looked curiously astonished. When Kate made no explanation of her refusal her sister-in-law returned to the attack. "Did Kate object to the relinquishment of right in the property?" The answer more than intimated that Kate "did not care at all for the property, but she did not wish to see Captain Hartley." The next question was direct:

"What is it, Kate? What slander has been told you?"

"No slander; simply I do not choose to see your brother."

"This is Virginia Carisbrooke's meddling."

"Which is unjust to Mrs. Carisbrooke. You know that I have been virtually divorced from your brother for years. I now prefer that the separation should be known and real."

"Do you mean to apply for a divorce, Kate?"

"I do not, but I mean to live alone."

"Well, if you are happier I shall urge no objection, neither will Wenner; in fact, he is going

back to Paris with me. But, Kate, you are his wife in point of law, and it is absolutely necessary that you sign these deeds. Moreover, it is partly to oblige me; I am going to be married to a cousin of the Duc de Rameaux, and Wenner has promised to pay the *dot*."

This was said with a flippant, silly giggle and an affectation of youthful ingenuousness that first amazed Kate and then touched a different key. She tried in vain to restrain the laugh that would come. The effort to be grave helped the comic effect. There was a hearty outburst of laughter, which Mrs. Cartaret's look of embarrassment first increased and then stilled. Before the now angry *ingénue* found words Kate softened her by yielding to the request she had preferred.

"Of course, Julia, if it is really important to you that I should go to Washington, I will go. I beg your pardon for my ill-timed mirth. I am not given to such silliness, but something upset me; I think I am nervous. Must you absolutely go to-night? Can you not wait until the early train to-morrow?"

"No; I cannot fail to be there to-night. Wenner will expect to meet me early to-morrow morn-

ing. He is to come from New York in the night train."

There was still a shade of anger in her voice, and Kate wisely left her to rest and recover. "There was need of preparation for the trip." The ladies all returned to entertain Mrs. Cartaret, and after an early dinner Rue sent the travellers to the station without their going back to Richmond.

Kate returned in two days. The news of Mrs. Cartaret's engagement was told, and the evening was filled with questions and laughing comments until good-nights were said.

Rose had finished her duties and left her mistress when Mrs. Carisbrooke knocked at the door and asked:

"Are you very sleepy, Kate? May I come in?"

"Not at all sleepy; and I shall rest better if you will come in and say your say."

"No, Kate; I came to listen. If you have nothing to tell me I shall only repeat my good-night."

"What is it you wish to hear?"

"I am not difficult. I will be content with scraps of information. To simplify the process suppose you begin at the beginning."

"Which beginning?"

"Well, with Julia's raid upon 'The Cedars.' Why were you wanted in Washington? and what argument prevailed upon you to meet Captain Hartley? I know you had resolved to avoid such a meeting."

"I have never said it."

"I do not remember that you have—in words. But then, my Kate, you have told me times without number when you were unconscious of the telling. I should be very stupid if I had not learned your face in all these years."

"Captain Hartley has sold Oakhill, the house in Washington, and some property in New York. It was necessary that I should sign the deeds. At first I hesitated about going, even to do that, which I was quite willing to do. Then Julia told me of her intended marriage. These sales were made to arrange the payment of her *dot*."

"I did not know she had any interest in old Simon Hartley's estate. I always thought he left her nothing."

"She had no interest in it; but her brother assumed the debt I was owing her. He released Belleview from the settlement of her jointure.

My father had made it a charge upon the estate."

"I would not have believed Captain Hartley had ever been so generous to either you or Julia. Ah! I see he was not. Your face is a very open book, my Kate. Will you tell me what was the consideration upon which his liberality builded?"

"I think he was generous in the matter, Mrs. Carisbrooke. At least he took risks in order that Belleview might belong to me unencumbered. He paid Julia, or rather she released the estate and took his note for the money. He also paid a chattel mortgage on the negroes—a debt that troubled me greatly. I was very anxious to be independent, to own my home and have it free. To arrange that for me he cleared it of all indebtedness. Of course I was only too glad to relinquish any right in his property."

"Oh! I understand: he bought your right of dower. Well, it seems you sold it to advantage. His real estate was no great fortune; and I hear that the Hartley millions in stocks have melted."

"I hope you do not think I took his money for relinquishment of his property. I have never thought I had any right to his wealth. That

was why the indebtedness I was under to him in the settlement of my father's estate so troubled me. But I did not think Captain Hartley paid by my giving up a claim I should never have urged, which it would not have been honest to urge."

"But, Kate, I do not understand. Did not you say the relinquishment of dower was the consideration?"

"Not the only one. In fact, I thought that nothing. I transferred to him my right of inheritance in that Alabama estate of my father's uncle—all right of inheritance from the Cartaret family. There were some lands in western Virginia, which were afterwards valuable. You know we won the Cartaret suit in the Supreme Court. I was glad to know the western Virginia lands alone paid Captain Hartley all I owed him. The Alabama property is comparatively valueless."

"You s-i-g-n-e-d a-w-a-y *all rights coming from the Cartarets?*"

"Yes."

Mrs. Carisbrooke sprang upon her feet and looked steadily at Kate as she said:

"Do you know what you have done? Do you know that you have mortgaged Rue's life to that

scoundrel? Do you know that you have made him the heir of 'The Cedars'? One by one he has removed every obstacle! I see it now. I believe all Carson's, all Robert Carisbrooke's suspicions to be well grounded. To spare your feelings we kept this from you. After your separation from him they all thought Rue safe; for without you he would have no claim. But now? Why, in selling your right you have almost put the prize he coveted in his hands. You have put a price upon Rue's life. If his cupidity halts it is through fear of Carson. Carson has sworn to him to kill him if Rue dies by any accident, any violence."

White, pale, and trembling, Kate slid from the bed and caught at her friend's hands:

'Mrs. Carisbrooke! Mrs. Carisbrooke! you think him capable of *murder?*"

"Carson believes the attack upon Bouie's Hill was aimed at Rue's life. He believes Hartley instigated that attack. The proofs are too broken and slight to convict him; but they were convincing to Carson and to—to others. I know Stanislaus Leszinksky struggled against his own beliefs. Kate, can you bear to hear more?"

"Yes; go on."

A sweeping cloud of black hair had fallen over her night-dress. Above it a white face was set in rigid lines. The only color was the flashing light of the dark eyes, which were fixed steadily upon Mrs. Carisbrooke.

"Kate, it will take all your courage, but you must hear it; the case now is desperate, and it needs desperate remedies. You remember the English horse which killed your brother?"

"Yes; Captain Hartley bought it when we were in London."

"He told Tom it was savage and unmanageable; but he did not tell him that it had killed a groom, as it afterward killed Tom."

"You believe—"

"That when he bought the horse Hartley was thinking of 'the great Cartaret estate.' He told the story of Tom's death to your father in such an abrupt manner that the telling killed him."

"And you all thought this and left me with a *murderer?*"

"Not in the beginning. The proof of the attack at Bouie's Hill changed what was until then regarded as an unjust and unwarranted conclusion of Robert's into well-grounded suspicion."

"*My brother! My father!*"

The cry was not only the cry of grief; it was the challenge of revenge. Mrs. Carisbrooke caught up a light shawl and wrapped it about Kate, and pushed the soft, wadded slippers toward the bare feet.

"Come, Kate, we must go at once to Carisbrooke. He is with Carson in the library."

As the library door opened two astonished gentlemen threw down their cigars and rose hastily. The doctor asked:

"What has happened, Virginia?"

"Kate has sold her interest in Rue's inheritance to Hartley."

There was a hurried "What!" from Doctor Carisbrooke and the muttered thunder of a terrible oath from the ex-dragoon.

The story was told by Mrs. Carisbrooke. Seating Kate and throwing a rug about her, Doctor Carisbrooke began a cool questioning of the excited witness:

"When did you sign the agreement of transfer?"

"Several years ago in Washington before the suit in the Supreme Court was decided."

"Was it read to you? Did you understand it perfectly?"

"Yes; it was read. Captain Hartley's attorney and a notary were present. Julia and Captain Hartley's secretary witnessed it. I never thought of Rue or of any possible interest I might ever have in 'The Cedars.'"

"Was there any mention of the old agreement when you were in Washington yesterday?"

"Yes; after I had signed the deeds of sale Captain Hartley gave me two papers to sign, which I read. One was an acknowledgment for the moneys he had paid out for my father's estate. The other—O Doctor Carisbrooke! I see now how I was deceived—the other was a long legal document with different items, I do not know what, but something about the legacies to which I signed my relinquishment. There was another small, thin parchment attached; I think it was pinned to that paper. I suspected nothing, and I looked at it carelessly; but I remember there was a confusing repetition of all actual and possible heirship from 'the Cartaret estate.' I am sure now it was so expressed—'*the Cartaret estate.*' I thought only of my father's estate."

"Fortunately you are still living to testify to that. The crafty scoundrel has not possession of

'The Cedars' yet. But we must force him to surrender the papers you signed ignorantly."

Carson, who had been walking the room to cool his rage, said:

"I will go to Washington in the early morning train. By ——, I mean he shall give them up!"

The doctor looked at him musingly, with as much deliberation as if Carson was a patient amiably waiting for a prescription, then he said:

"I do not think you had better go alone. We must be careful to have witnesses. And the demand must be made by Robert as Kate's trustee—you and Robert together, for you are Rue's trustees. I think I will be your best witness. You had better take me. But you must send some one to Richmond for Robert. Come to think of it, we will go to Richmond, late as it is. It is the only way to explain to Robert the urgency of the matter. No, do not ring; that will rouse the household. It is better not to say anything of this to Rue or Molly; I would rather they did not know. Rue would be either angry or careless, and Molly needlessly nervous and alarmed. Better tell them it is a matter of Kate's—a signature which she was deceived into giving. I shall be Jesuit enough not to tell all

the truth. Kate will have to go with us. And, Virginia, you had better come. Can you be ready in time, and meet us in the morning at the station near here? We will start from Richmond."

Mrs. Carisbrooke promised, and the doctor and Carson went out to find Oscar.

When they returned Kate had gone to her room. Mrs. Carisbrooke was waiting. Carson went to say good-by to Molly and give his partial explanation. While the doctor was packing his small valise Mrs. Carisbrooke asked:

"If Hartley has gone to New York?"

"We will go on."

"Then I had better go prepared for that trip?"

"Yes; and tell Kate. Virginia, make Kate understand that she must get a divorce. I feel sure it is the only safe way out of this business. That would force a final settlement. Every day's delay gives this fellow a chance to plot new villany."

"One would think, Carisbrooke, we were back in the middle ages; and yet it seems half ridiculous to think of Simon Hartley's heir as a nineteenth-century Borgia."

The doctor stopped his packing and looked up.

"It is rather queer, now that I think of it. I saw old Hartley just before his death; as you spoke his face came back to me. And I remembered at once that he did resemble that picture of Cæsar Borgia we saw in Rome. It is queer. But now I have stupidly set you off on your pet craze. There you go!"

She was softly clapping her hands and nodding at him.

"O Carisbrooke! you have stumbled on a discovery. I remember that picture. Hartley himself will look just like it, if he is not hanged too early in life. And Mai! and Mai!—I have tried and tried to trace her beauty to my gambler. The effort was always a failure; but I know now where the classic head was modelled. Brow, and head, and chin—all Borgia! All my gambler did was to keep the hook out of his grandchild's nose. Why, you dear old Carisbrooke, we have stumbled backward into the middle ages with a vengeance. That head of Stan's in the library, with its high resolve, is not the head of a soldier. He is our mediæval saint; Rue is—"

"Virginia, we are all—I nearly said it, and it

would have been true. But I will say I am a booby, without characterizing the rest of the family. Do please leave the middle ages rotten and forgotten, and find me some shirts with but tons on."

"Carisbrooke, you are the very nicest *old* man I know, but you are brutally unpoetic. My brilliant imagination and my scholarly inquisitiveness are wasted qualities. I have not even been able to transmit them to Molly. She is as stolid and matter-of-fact as—her latest ancestor."

"Thank Heaven! She is not mediæval."

"No, she isn't. She, and you, and Carson would anchor any house to the prosaic. Here are the shirts."

"Thank you! Good-night! Be at the station in time. Better see Kate again to-night and tell her to be prepared to go to New York. When will you tell Rue of this flitting—to-night or in the early morning?"

"Why, to-night, of course. The *châtelaine* must be warned of our departure, and I must tell without telling the reason. How much she will miss us!"

"She will have Molly."

"Which means reason, and common sense. I

understand the stab and the self-gratulation! Adieu, my ancient and revered *medicus!*"

Kate and Mrs. Carisbrooke were standing on the platform next morning as the Richmond train for Washington approached. Carson was on the steps as it stopped, and they were met at the door by the doctor and his brother. There were repressed eagerness and excitement in every face.

In Washington the ladies waited at the station until the gentlemen returned. Hartley had gone on to New York.

That night the self-appointed deputation arrived at the New York Hotel. Hartley was not in town.

The pursuit was not given up. They drove out to Oakhill. He had not been there since the night before he went to Washington to see his sister. Neither had Mrs. Cartaret been there.

The disappointed detachment returned to New York, and a fresh examination of the hotel registers proved that Hartley and his sister had come on from Washington the same day Kate returned to "The Cedars."

They had spent the night at the Astor House, and sailed the next morning for Liverpool.

The pursuit was ended.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Now for the love of God and of seint Jon
Leseth no tyme, but forthe as ye may."

KATE would not listen to reason in the person of Mrs. Carisbrooke. "A divorce? No!" She remembered Leszinksky's words: "A legal separation *de corps et de biens?*" "If that was needed to get the papers—yes. That would only be a lawful ratification of existent conditions." Even that she would not do if Hartley would surrender all claim, real or possible, that she had ignorantly signed away to Rue's inheritance. She "had already written to him and to Julia, and she felt sure he would give up those papers. Public scandal was unnecessary. He would yield to her demand, supported as it was by Mr. Robert Carisbrooke, who had been the executor of her father's will." As Carson, for private reasons of his own, was inclined to this opinion, it was decided in the Carisbrooke council to wait for Hartley's answer.

Dr. Carisbrooke's holiday was over. He had

to return to patients who were grumbling at his prolonged absence. Mrs. Carisbrooke and little Brooke Carson went to Cincinnati with him.

Miss Esmond, Anne Warrington, and Steenie were still at Cape May. Dr. Carisbrooke had thought it better for the invalids not to return until the October frosts had conquered the miasma that crept up with the east wind from the Chickahominy.

When the health-seekers should return from Cape May, Kate was going South with the Robert Carisbrookes—to Selma, to Mobile, and then to Havana for the winter. They insisted she should stay with them until her affairs were definitely settled.

The Carsons had promised to winter at "The Cedars." In fact, Carson knew he would be constantly anxious and expectant away from there.

The "Borgia" *redivivus* of Mrs. Carisbrooke was the *bête noire* of the ex-dragoon.

(When a practical, unimaginative man makes a hobby of a dislike it sets him chasing the wildest fancies. In the simplest incident he sees the working of sinister design. Every noise is a note of warning, every stranger a person to be suspected.)

The notion was firmly fixed in Carson's mind that he was defending a fortress. He jealously guarded approach to "The Cedars," and he soon had two devoted and vigilant aids.

The first moment she could learn where they were after the war was ended Rue had sent to Stearns and Pike to come to "The Cedars."

Bob promptly answered the summons, and was immediately installed as overseer and general factotum of "Capin Rue's" dominions.

Pike was glad to visit the children of his beloved friends, but he refused to make his home with them, as he had refused the invitation of their father. He said that he "hadn't never l'arnt the ways of the old settle*ments*," adding that he "felt freer and nigher God when he could study his will in the woods, and the hills, and the plains, whar it was writ for the dumb critters, and the men He had called to smooth the rough places and make the paths straight fur the comin' of his Gospel."

So after a short visit the maimed missionary took leave of his friend's children and his old comrade. He went back to his work among the outlaws and savages of the border.

The Osages and the Pawnees, even the wild

Comanches, who had tortured him until he was but a wreck of the strong man they had known as a "great brave and a mighty hunter," gave him a cordial welcome. Warrior after warrior would come with stately dignity to the lodge-door when the village dogs barked their recognition and the children shouted the coming of "the crippled chief who had come alive out of the fire to bring the messages of the Great Spirit to his red children."

The Indian women forgot the heaviness of labor and the pains of unassisted travail in their generous eagerness to add something to the simple fare they put before this beloved guest.

Pike's martyrdom had won him the freedom of the forest and an influence for good with tribes and peoples that can never be fully reckoned until the last day, when he shall stand, with his "sheaves in his hand," face to face with the great Teacher who called him to bring into the fold the lost sheep of the mountains and the desert. Unlettered in the teachings of this world, unlearned in the dogmas of schools and creeds, not by the installation of churchmen or the laying-on of hands was he made a help and a light to the poor and the needy. The still,

small voice had called him through God's working in his own heart, and the way of life had been revealed to him in the law of love as it ruled the life of Leszinksky.

Carson sent Bob to Pike with a message.

Bob heard of Pike first at the Seminole village; he had just left there to visit a tribe in the Wichita Hills. At the crossing of the Washita that evening Bob found him. Carson's fears and needs, as he had told them to Bob, were told to Pike.

"Yes, Bob, I'll go. It's fur the sake of the child of our old lootenant. I darsn't refuse to go. The Lord's put it upon me. I ain't a bit o' trouble in my mind about the right on it."

Bob's message had been given, and the consent was instantaneous. The simple, receptive mind understood the call: "The Master hath need of thee."

Rue, without knowing the cause of his coming or the solicitude of her friends, gave Pike the kindest and warmest of welcomes.

Carson could now sum up his defensive force with a feeling of content and satisfaction. Pike, Bob, and Oscar were of tried devotion.

The negroes on the place were the most faith-

ful of the old family servants. Carson was sure that in reconsidering his first decision to employ a detective he had done well. Pike and Bob were more trustworthy.

Before these arrangements were perfected or Bob had returned with Pike, late one afternoon the young West Point cadet arrived at "The Cedars" from Cape May, where he had gone with his Philadelphia comrade to see Steenie.

Mrs. Hartley was in Richmond, Carson was out in the grounds, and Molly had gone to her room with Daisy.

Rue had tea brought out on the piazza. She told the boy—he was yet but a boy—of the Carisbrookes' departure, of his father, and of Molly and the children while the servant waited; but when Mead had gone with the tea-things she asked:

"Was Steenie looking quite well?"

"No, and yes; she is looking wonderfully pretty, but there is a change in the 'Hummingbird' that I do not understand. I presume I scarcely realize that she is no longer a child. If it is not an indiscretion I would like to ask you a question, Rue."

"Ask it; a wise cousin's question could not well be indiscreet."

"That handsome dandy, Bradnor, was constantly in attendance upon Steenie; and whenever I hear from you he always is or has been at 'The Cedars.' Is he engaged to Steenie?"

"No." The answer was sharp and decided; but the boy, watching her face, saw no change there except a slight quiver in the lines about the mouth.

"I see *you* are not in love with him, Rue; but I am very much afraid that Steenie is. She has eyes and ears for no one else, which rather touches my vanity. It is so long since those old days when we were always together, I suppose she has forgotten them."

"That is merely a jealous deception of your vanity, Stan."

"Am I jealous?"

"Yes; you always were. You used to be jealous of my love for Steenie. Now, Stan, it is of Steenie's impossible suitor."

"Not at all impossible. I watched the fellow closely; and, to convince you that it is not jealousy, I will tell you that what most offended me was the change in his manner to Steenie when Miss Esmond or Miss Warrington were present. It was then a teasing, bantering manner, an effort

to treat her as a child—a manner that annoyed Steenie; it always brought burning red spots into her cheeks. If Steenie is ill, Rue, that fellow is partly, if not altogether, the cause. I am telling you honestly, Rue, what I believe. I am sure Steenie loves him. I did not mean to give you all my reasons, but your incredulous look is a challenge; besides, I only waited to ask you if they were engaged before—as you tell me they are not engaged, I will teach the fellow to mend his manners."

"Stan, you are altogether wrong. It is a mistake."

"Rue, I saw their parting the evening before I left Cape May. I was in the parlor waiting for Steenie when she and Bradnor came to the window which opens upon the veranda. I started to meet them when I heard Bradnor say, 'I shall say good-by here, my darling,' and he took Steenie in his arms and kissed her. She came in and passed me without seeing me—she was blinded by her tears. She is to me a sister. My first impulse was to follow him, but I thought they might be engaged. I knew he had been very kind to Uncle Stan and to you."

She could not tell him she was herself engaged

to Bradnor, and yet the reticence seemed unfair. Suddenly he asked:

"Is that my father out there under that clump of cedars—there to the right of the avenue?"

"No. You are losing your sight, Stan. I did not think West Point would so ruin a frontiersman's eyes. That is Oscar."

"I could not see the face, and he has a soldierly figure. What a pretty effect the red tint of the evening gives as it creeps under the dark cedars! It reminds me of the sunsets at Bouie's Hill."

There was a faint "Halloo!" over in the grounds toward the river. The figure under the trees bounded out in the open and ran rapidly down the sloping sward. They saw him jump a fence and cross the wavy pasture-field, then he vanished behind the woods that fringed the river-bank.

"Could that be my father calling? What is wrong? Oscar ran like a stag which seeks cover."

"It is nothing. You forget we are not on the frontier."

"I wish we were on the frontier, Rue; I like best the life of the woods. I wish we were living

in the Wichita Hills. I have never seen anything so beautiful as that enchanting valley of the 'Three Mountains.' I am more than half Indian, Rue. When I think of my grandfather, of his brave, life-long fight with such odds against him, of his death on the Rio Grande, I am altogether a Seminole."

Both were silent; then the boy's voice changed from the ring of defiance to a low, caressing tone as he took Rue's hand and carried it to his lips.

"But for you, Rue, I would never have left my mother's people. I did not mean to tell you, Rue, until I could bring you some proof that I came from a race of warrior-kings, some deed of valor or devotion that would have won me a distinctive title in the lodges of my people—a title which would have given me the right to tell the daughter of Leszinksky that I love her. I do not know when I have not loved you, Rue; I have had but two thoughts all my life—you and my mother's people. To please you I listened to my father's pleading and accepted a position which, without thought of you as reward, the grandson of Coacoochee would have spurned. But now that I have told you this, Ning-ah-shaw-na-qui-ta, tell me what I can do to win

you. For life is nothing if I may not always turn to one star. The light of my life, my proud, brave Rue, daughter of kings, is the light of your eyes—soft, tender, beautiful eyes, yet I have seen the light of battle flash in them. I have always loved you, my Princess, though I never knew what my worship meant until we were separated for so long. Then I thought over every day of our happy childhood, and I knew that my love, the one true, passionate, eternal love, sprang into life when I stood beside my dead mother, desperate and hopeless, until I looked up and saw you, my darling! From that instant my life and my love were yours. What will you do with them, Rue?"

She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him again and again, not passionately—he felt it was not love—but with a strong outburst of grief.

"O Stan! O my cousin! I love you, Stan! I love you dearly. How shall I refuse your love? How shall I tell you?"

"What?"

And he held her back from him and looked into her eyes.

"Stan! Stan! You were mistaken about

Steenie: it is I who am to marry Colonel Bradnor, not Steenie. O Stan! I had always thought some day to give you Steenie."

"Farewell, Rue! My darling, my lost love, good-by!"

Oscar did not go directly to the point which the sound indicated.

He had seen General Carson in the low, sedgy stretch of delta formed by a creek which flowed for some distance behind the wooded bluff on the James that formed the southwestern boundary of "The Cedars."

A moment before the call came Oscar saw a man run across a cleared field which extended from the marshy delta to the edge of the wood that scantily fringed the uneven swells of the low, rising hills into which the bluff was broken by the abrupt curve of the river.

Taking Carson's shout as a warning not to let the person escape, Oscar ran toward a point where he believed he could intercept the fugitive, who would have to make a sharp ascent of the high bluff commanding the bank of the river above the curve.

In the crafts of the woodsman and the runner

Oscar's judgment was rarely at fault. He did arrive first. He heard the snapping of twigs which broke in the grasp of the tired climber; then he heard the panting breath of the man who was breaking the twigs. Keeping under the shelter of the undergrowth, he waited.

As he gained the summit the man was looking back at Carson. Unfortunately Carson had kept on the narrow bank, beneath the heights, until it suddenly ended, and he was forced to go back some distance before he could climb the bluff. This had given the fugitive time. With one more glance at Carson, as if he wished to doubly assure himself that the distance was safe, he sat down to rest.

Oscar could now see the man's features distinctly. It was Hartley's old servant, Marten.

For three or four minutes there was neither motion nor sound save the swashing of the water as it struck the rounded point it was slowly wearing away, and the long-drawn breaths of the man who was watching for the approach of his pursuer.

Rising, Marten took from his pocket a poniard. He pulled it from its sheath, muttering as he examined the point:

"If he forces me to it I'll kill him. I've lost my chance of seeing the girl, so I'd as well stick to Hartley."

Oscar had left the shelter of the bushes and was almost upon Marten when he looked up. As they clinched the negro's hand was badly cut, but he had Marten by the throat and had forced him to drop the dagger. Then he threw him face downward, and kneeled upon his back to pinion him to the ground while he searched for the weapon. Failing to find it in the dim twilight, he lifted Marten by the back of the collar and waistband and carried him to the extreme point where the bluff hung over the river. The man writhed and twisted like a serpent in his effort to grasp the enemy who held him aloft, relentless as fate. There was a swinging to and fro to give the needed impetus; then, as if from a catapult, Marten was thrown far out into the whirling curve of the waters, which were going out with the tide to the sea.

Carson, climbing the ascent, heard a frightful mingling of prayers and imprecations; when he arrived, the first thing he saw was that terrible act of vengeance.

"Good God, Oscar! you have killed him."

"Yes, Marse Carson, I've paid his 'count fur the massiker thar at Bouie's Hill and the old debt that's been a-waitin' ever since them days when he used to come to my cabin on business for the devil, his master. It's allus been borne in on my mind that I'd get a chance at Capin Hartley yet, and now I'm 'most sure of it. The Lord 'ill d'liver him into my hands, like he did that murderous houn'. Lucy's debt ain't paid, and my Marse Stan's chile ain't safe while that head devil is out o' hell. I know it, sir; I'se allus looked fur it: I'll kill him yet."

While he was talking he was on his knees searching again for the weapon. At length, having found it, he came with it to Carson.

"Here it is, sir; and here is the sheath that he dropped when he saw me."

"What is it?"

"The knife he cut me with—the knife he tuck out when he was waitin' here fur you, sir."

After further question Carson knew that Oscar would come unharmed out of a trial. A case of self-defence could be made, if Oscar would only be silent as to the hatred grown out of the past. They went on to the house, and Carson's last direction to Oscar was to say nothing of the occur-

rence for the present, but to search the river-bank early in the morning for the boat in which he was sure Marten had come to "The Cedars."

After a night's reflection Carson determined to leave any discovery of Marten's fate to chance. If the waters cast him ashore it would be time enough to tell the story of Oscar's throwing an armed assailant and marauder into the river. The secret kept would leave Hartley uneasy. *The slight pressure of an imaginary screw might force him to return the papers.*

Carson had already written a request for the papers, which was also a plain and positive expression of certain beliefs he entertained not peculiarly flattering to Hartley. He now supplemented that letter with a second epistle, in which he made a fresh avowal of his "beliefs, not merely predicated upon suspicion, but based upon irrefutable proofs now *in secure custody*." He weighed every word with the precision of a jurist. Without saying it he wished Hartley to infer that he held Marten, who, either willingly or unwillingly, had betrayed his master.

After writing this very satisfactory and fulminatory letter Carson went out in the grounds in the early morning to look for Oscar and to charge

him to hold his peace about "the accident on the bluff," which Oscar was very willing to do. In truth, the negro's conscience was either so dull or it so entirely justified him that it left him undisturbed about consequences and utterly regardless of himself in the matter of Marten's death. In fact, by a different train of thought he had come to Carson's conclusion, that to entrap Hartley the "accident, as Marse Carson called it," had better be kept secret for the present.

In this serene state of fancied security I will leave them while I follow the young cadet, whose visit Rue had not yet found it convenient to mention.

He left the house unseen by any of the people of the place; in fact, only Rue and Mead knew of his arrival. That night Mead had orders from his mistress to forget the fact.

The young cadet walked rapidly down the avenue. At first he thought to go directly to the station from which he had walked to "The Cedars." Then, remembering that his luggage had gone on to Richmond to be left at the Exchange, and that his father would probably be in town the next day and hear of his so speedily terminated visit, he turned from the avenue to-

ward the point from which he had heard his father's "Halloo!"

He would rather have avoided the meeting just then, but he thought it would be impossible for him to leave Richmond, or even the plantation, without being recognized. Neither did he foresee the assistance he would receive in the orders given to Mead.

He had crossed the brook that environed the lawn, and was walking in the woods which skirted the left of the open fields between the house grounds and the swampy delta of the "bluff creek."

Every step in the direction of his father had increased the boy's reluctance to meet him and tell the story of his rejection.

He had stopped for an instant to reflect upon the chances of getting to Richmond and leaving there that night. He was just at the edge of the wood, and close to a little channel, the eastern mouth of the creek, which he could see ran into the James. Not five yards distant a small row-boat was pulled up under the low-hanging boughs of the willows.

Without a moment's hesitation, thinking it a fortunate issue out of a dilemma, young Carson

pushed the boat out into the water, and after five minutes' steady rowing was out in the James.

Just then the whistle of a locomotive across the wide river, and the slacking up of a long train which was in full view, showed him an unsuspected and speedy route to Richmond. He could cross the river by rowing up to the point, and then float with the current until he gradually traversed it and reached the station on the opposite shore.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"O Dis!
Why is this mortal here?"

ALL these different efforts at concealment were successful in different measures and ways.

Carson's met him in the morning in a mystery he could not unravel, but which filled his laboring soul with fresh anxiety.

There had been a boat, but it was gone.

He would not believe Oscar, and he scarcely believed his eyes when he saw where it had been hidden, and saw also the tracks in the red clay, hardened by the morning sun, of the man who had pushed it back in the channel. All the way from the house to the hiding-place under the willows he had argued the point with himself: "It must have been stolen by some negro who was prowling around in the night."

That it was the boat which had brought Marten to "The Cedars" he never doubted.

But who could have taken it away?

Had Marten a confederate?

When Carson saw the tracks of the slender boots with the pointed toes and the high instep, he knew it could be no negro's feet that had left their imprint in the clay.

But whose? Hartley's?

The suggestion was so bewildering that he left Oscar with strict orders "to stay about the house armed with revolver and derringers until his return from Richmond, where he must go at once." He impressed upon Molly in such mysterious language the necessity of her not losing sight of Rue for an instant during his absence that he left her in a mild state of doubt betwixt his sanity and Rue's.

Molly was rather inclined to think Rue the lunatic, for Rue had acted very strangely the previous evening. Molly had left Rue alone, as she thought, on the piazza while she was giving Daisy her bath and putting her to sleep, and then when she asked for her hostess she heard of a headache which had sent Rue to her room.

That afternoon Rue had seemed unusually well.

Further inquiry did not enlighten Molly. The housekeeper had "sent tea to Miss Rue and she had eaten heartily." In fact, that morning the

housekeeper had questioned Mead as to the possibility of Miss Rue having finished a cold chicken and certain dainties. To defend his truthfulness Mead had called in his mistress. "Yes; she had all those things."

Then Molly concluded Rue's headache was a deserved indigestion, while her graver doubts on the sanity question again vibrated from Rue to her husband.

"General Carson"—Molly was a martinet and always gave her husband his title—"certainly seemed queer last night; come to think of it, ever since his return from that sudden journey to New York he has been queer."

It would have been impossible for Molly to have used a more accusative word than *queer*. In fact, although she had laughed at, she had half-adopted, the belief of one of her old Virginian grandaunts: "Better be wrong than queer. You can privately repent and amend if you are wrong, or you can conceal it, my dear; but if you are queer it is patent to sight, and the world never forgives what it is forced to see."

This queerness of Carson's disturbed Molly.

Having to defend Mead from accusation, and virtually confess herself a *gourmande*, would

have ordinarily only moved Rue to laughter. But she, too, had something to conceal. She half-regretted the orders she had given Mead to say nothing of the cadet's arrival and departure; but now what explanation could she make? And she knew that Molly and Carson would both ask questions. "If Cousin Kate were here she would understand without words; but Uncle Billy and Molly must have words to aid understanding."

Later in the day Mead came to Rue with a muddled account of some boat that had been stolen from the place, "either by the gemman dat owned it or else by somebody whar had been up prowlin' 'round de house. Oscar done tole me 'bout de boat when he come askin' me if I hadn't seed nobody 'round de place yestedday. I did what you told me, Miss Rue—I said nobody hadn't been yer."

"I did not intend that; but you cannot help it now. As you have gone that far, do not go back. Say nothing of my cousin Stan."

"No, marm. Oscar ain't gwine to get nothin' out o' me."

So Rue's concealment resulted in her humiliation.

In its way Oscar's secrecy was a success. His deed neither troubled nor shamed him. He was as impassive and undisturbed as an insentient instrument of justice would be. Marten had deserved death; and he, finding opportunity, had not taken him at a disadvantage, but had executed a sentence long delayed.

Oscar's only regret was in the failure to find occasion to execute another act of justice which was overdue. Yet he thought opportunity might come before night. He had taken his dead master's derringers from their cases and carefully loaded them, and he had thrust Marten's poniard in his waistband. Carson was somewhat shocked when, as he was riding out of the gate, he turned to ask Oscar "if he was armed," and the negro coolly showed him the weapon of the man he had thrown into the river.

Carson was in Richmond all day. After sending the despatch he came to town to send he spent the day at Robert Carisbrooke's. They so perfectly agreed in their estimate of Hartley that they naturally agreed in the measure Carson had thought of.

Late that night they rode out to "The Cedars" together. No answer yet to the cable despatch.

But the next morning the message came while they were at breakfast. Molly's fear of Carson's "queerness" was somewhat relieved when she saw that her uncle Robert was bitten by a like mania.

With half-spoken excuses they hurried out upon the lawn before they opened the despatch. It was from the American minister at Paris:

"Captain Wenner Hartley is in Paris. Dined with him last night."

The two gentlemen regarded each other blankly. "Then who could it be?" said Robert Carisbrooke. "Who could it be?" echoed Carson. Mead, who might have enlightened him, came running down the avenue, saying as he passed:

"Colonel Bradnor's a-comin'; I seed him cross the field. He's a-ridin' ole Mr. Grey's hoss from de station."

Again the puzzled gentlemen looked at each other. "Could it be Bradnor?" said Robert Carisbrooke. "Could it be?" echoed Carson.

They had not long to wait; Bradnor sprang from his horse and came directly toward Carson.

"General, I came this morning from Cape May. Miss Esmond died last night."

In two hours Rue was on her way to Cape May with Bradnor and Carson.

The mansion of Castlewood was still a charred ruin, but the gates of the "House of the Dead" were opened for the stately spinster with whom the name of Esmond ended in Virginia. Anne Warrington came home with Rue from Castlewood.

Steenie had not gone to Castlewood; she said she was too unnerved by the shock of Miss Esmond's sudden death. At Rue's request Colonel Bradnor took her sister directly to "The Cedars." His stay at that time was short, and soon there was a general flitting.

Anne Warrington had a letter from her relatives in England, begging her to come home. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke went with her to New York, and, when she was on the *Scotia*, gave her a draft on the Barings for five thousand pounds.

"It belongs to you. It is the payment of an old debt owing to the Warringtons. No, certainly *I* do not give it to you. It was really paid to me for you. I give you my honor it is *in no way a gift from me.*"

Anne still looked doubtingly, but he had told

the truth. It was the old loyal debt of the Carterets to the Warringtons—the debt of friendship which the heiress of "The Cedars" paid to the despoiled and homeless descendants of her grandfather's friend.

The week after Anne's departure the Robert Carisbrookes and Kate started southward.

Bob and Pike had arrived, and at Carson's suggestion Rue installed Pike in a great arm-chair beside the front door as hall-porter. The duty was light and the place pleased the crippled giant. He truthfully gave as reason for his delight the fact that he could see all the visitors who came. From morning till night he sat there pleasedly working the simple contrivance that made the opening easy. His only exercise was on the front piazza, where at frequent intervals the regular beat of his crutches could be heard.

Bob let the plantation work go loosely, but he made an alert and watchful picket.

Oscar was almost constantly in the saddle. It was strange how much exercise the thoroughbreds needed.

Rue could not take a quiet ride alone, as she liked sometimes to do on the plantation, without seeing Oscar, on the most mettlesome of the

plunging colts, crossing her path and scurrying through the lonely woods.

The sisters had promised to go with the Carsons to Rosebank at Christmas but Steenie nervously shrank from the journey, and so Rue gave it up.

After another investment in cable messages, Carson at length consented to leave the sisters and take Molly and Daisy to see Brooke and the "grandparents." He was compelled, he said, to go to Texas for a short trip.

The reason of that trip was an open secret.

Stanislaus Carson had resigned from West Point and gone out to join Coacoochee's son, the young chief of the Seminoles. There was trouble on the border, and Carson was anxious for the safety of "Laha's" child.

Before Carson left "The Cedars" it was arranged that the Wilsons should spend the winter there. Steenie's delicate health was sufficient reason for the invitation and its acceptance.

With Dr. Wilson and his wife at "The Cedars," and the watchful and devoted guardsmen, whose duties were clearly defined and understood, Carson felt that Rue's safety was insured.

He knew that Hartley was in Paris and would not leave there for the winter. For he had secured the services of an exceedingly intelligent and trustworthy agent, who kept him informed of every movement of the man he thought it necessary to watch until the papers were restored and Kate's final settlement should detach Hartley from all interest in either or any of the Cartaret possessions.

Hartley had not answered Carson's letters, but he had written to Dr. Carisbrooke (which the doctor characterized as a very manly and straightforward declaration), declining to answer letters from General Carson or Mr. Robert Carisbrooke "containing offensive threats and still more offensive suspicions." He offered, however, to meet Dr. Carisbrooke in New York during the coming May, and return to him the papers which Mrs. Hartley's trustee had demanded, provided Mrs. Hartley would relinquish all present or future rights in his estate.

Dr. Carisbrooke urged the acceptance of this proposition; and as Kate also insisted, Mr. Robert Carisbrooke consented and it was so arranged.

The waters in which Marten had gone down had cast no evidence ashore, and Carson con-

gratulated himself upon his discretion in keeping that secret. In truth, he had but few regrets for the "accident." He regarded it more as an indiscretion than a crime. Oscar had simply anticipated a decision which law would have given if law had cognition of the facts.

"It would have been well for the fellow to be hanged," Carson thought; but then he was content with the easier death, because the drowning left Hartley in ignorance of his familiar's fate.

CHAPTER XL.

"He next had the *grande passion*, and narrowly escaped marrying an heiress of great expectations and a countless number of châteaux."

CHRISTMAS at "The Cedars" was a dreary day. The Carsons were gone, and a messenger had come at daylight for Dr. and Mrs. Wilson. Mrs. Wilson's mother was very ill; of course they must go.

The doctor knew nothing of any danger threatening Rue, and Steenie seemed better since the house was so quiet. His only uneasiness was for his wife. The sudden ill news and the drive to town in a downpour of rain were serious trials to a delicate invalid. Rue assisted in the preparations for Mrs. Wilson's comfort; and when, as they were leaving, the doctor begged her to let him send some of her friends out from Richmond to stay until their return, she declined, saying:

"No, we are very well protected; and I could not ask any one to brave such weather unless there was some absolute necessity. Only think of Mrs. Wilson! We will do very well. I shall

send you news from here every day until you come home."

In the afternoon came a telegram from Bradnor saying he would "arrive at the station near 'The Cedars' on the late train from Washington."

Rue gave orders to Oscar to send to the station, and then went to tell the news to Steenie.

After searching the house she found her sister lying on a lounge before the library fire.

The girl's arms were crossed under her head, and the heavy mass of her loose hair brought into full relief the delicate, pale face and the thin, attenuated hands. Her eyes were fixed upon the portrait of her father over the chimney-piece. Something in the pose suggested hopeless suffering. Rue's eyes followed her sister's to the face of their father, and the thought of the day he brought the child to her in Philadelphia gave a strange significance to Steenie's attitude. "She will have no one but you, Rue; I know I can trust her to you, my daughter." The words were in her ears as she spoke to Steenie:

"Are you ill, little sister?"

As Rue touched her the girl buried her head in the clasped hands and clustering hair, which she

hastily drew over her face. Then, when Rue knelt beside her, she burst into long-drawn, shivering sobs.

"Steenie! my darling! can you not trust me? There is nothing I would not do for you, little sister—nothing." Steenie's arms were around her, and the sobs were pitiful gasps.

"O Steenie, Steenie, tell me! What can I do? Do you not know, do you not believe, that I love you better than any—than all the world? Our father gave you to me, little sister. You are mine—my own precious gift, the dearest care I have on earth. I promised our father that I would care for your happiness above all else. Will you not let me keep my promise, little sister? O Steenie! trust me. Believe me and trust in me. I would give you my life—but that is nothing to give—I would give you all that life is or that it can bring me to save you from pain or grief."

Rue was kneeling beside her sister, kissing her hair, her hands, her brow, when the door opened and Mammy Sara entered. "Go to the dining-room, Mammy Sara, and wait there."

"No! no!" gasped Steenie. "I want Mammy Sara. O Mammy! take me to my room." The negro woman lifted the girl to her feet, and,

holding her arms about her, led her from the room after giving a reproachful look to Rue, who stood silently aside to let them pass.

As the figures vanished behind the closing door Rue turned and looked long and steadily at her father's portrait. She was half interrogating the picture in her thoughts: "Why did she look so appealingly to you? Am I in fault? Is it anything I have done? Is there anything I can do?" She sank into the place Steenie had left, and tried with closest attention to go over the day—the past day—every incident in the weeks since Steenie returned from Cape May. Suddenly Stanislaus Carson's misunderstanding about Bradnor came to her recollection. "Could it be that? Could Stan have judged Steenie's heart more truly than I have done?"

There was fresh interruption. Mammy Sara came with a scrawl from Steenie:

"Dear sister, do not worry about me; I am only nervous and unreasonable. But I do wish to beg a favor. Please let me go to town tomorrow to the convent? The sisters will take me for a few weeks, and I am sure it will do me good. Please, sister, let me go, and do not notice my humors. Lovingly, STEENIE."

Rue looked up from the reading to Mammy Sara. Something she saw in her old nurse's face convinced her that Mammy Sara had the key to the mystery.

"Mammy, Steenie and I are your children. Since I lost my mother you are the only mother I have known. You know how I loved—how I still love and honor—my father's memory. You can and you must tell me what is grieving my sister. I promised him to care first for my sister."

"She's jes' breakin' her heart, an' I thought hard o' you, Miss Rue—I did, honey—'cause you oughtn't to have dat chile here whar Marse Bradnor is; if you's a-goin' to marry him she's jes' tryin' to die and get outen yo' way."

"Out of my way? I would give my life for her happiness."

"Yes, dat's jes' it; that's jes' whar de trouble is: she knows if you thought she loved Marse Bradnor you wouldn't marry him nohow. An' you see if you did dat, Miss Rue, you'd do mo' harm 'an good. You know how sens'tive Miss Steenie is, an' she loves him, Miss Rue, she does; but she loves you, and she'd die 'fore she'd take anything you wanted."

"But I do not want him, Mammy Sara. I am only keeping a promise to him because of his kindness to my father and because of my pledge."

"Yes, chile, I understan' you; and I understan' him better 'an bofe of you chillen could, an' I'm sorry he ever come to de place. If Miss Steenie had de fortune it would a-been her always—dat is, since she's growed up. She's a heap the prettiest—I don't mean to hurt yo' feelins, chile, but she is—an' dat man thinks a heap o' looks; he mighty proud o' his'n."

"Well, Mammy Sara, if she loves him she shall marry him, and have the fortune, too."

"Now, you see, Miss Rue, thar 'tis: dat's jes yo' way, an' dat's jes' the way to make it all wuss. You go fur to try to do dat, an' dat's de las' o' Miss Steenie. 'Fore God, I don't see no way outen dis trouble."

"Do not tell Steenie what you have told me."

"Lord! no, Miss Rue; I ain't gwine to tell her nothin'. And please, Miss Rue, whatever way you manages 'bout all dis troubl', don't tell I said it, Miss Rue. She's a-restin' now, an' you better leave her to me fur to-night."

"Tell her I will see her in the morning, or

sooner if she wishes to see me. To-morrow we will arrange for her to go to Richmond, if she still prefers that to something I have to propose to her; but I had better write it." She finished the few lines and dismissed Mammy Sara, who almost immediately returned with a message. Steenie would see her sister the next morning; she had taken a composing draught the doctor had left for her should she need it, and now was trying to go to sleep. With strict directions to Mammy Sara not to tell Steenie of Bradnor's expected arrival, the nurse was sent back to her charge.

At eleven o'clock that night Bradnor arrived.

Rue was waiting in the library. Their meetings and partings had always been ceremonious, never showing anything of the joy or the sweet pain of lovers.

To-night there was rather more of warmth in Rue's manner as she offered her hand and detained the servant to ask if he had dined.

"Yes, he had dined."

Then tea was brought and they were alone. The dialogue across the tea-things reminded Rue of the evening in the piazza with Stan, and her color deepened.

"I am glad you are here for Christmas. You

can assist me in settling something that I am anxious to do at once. You know that I insisted on postponing our marriage until Steenie should come of age."

"But she is not yet of age." There was so evident a plea for delay in the voice of her betrothed that Rue maliciously continued:

"She will be eighteen next year, and we are within a week of 1868. With your consent this can be arranged at once."

"What, our marriage?" The look of consternation was so real that Rue laughed.

"No; you can be easy there. We are not to be married ever."

He looked at her an astonished interrogation. She went on:

"This has all been a mistake."

"Not at all. You promised and I cannot release you. I am in no hurry—I mean I am willing to wait; but then in two years more I must be married."

"I know. You lose your inheritance if you are not married then; and you must marry a woman whose fortune equals the legacy your granduncle left you. It was three hundred thousand dollars, I believe?"

"Yes, three hundred thousand. But your fortune exceeds that, and so does mine now. I have taken good care of the money left me."

"If Steenie had three hundred thousand dollars would you not prefer Steenie?"

"It is useless asking such a question. I am engaged to you. Besides, Steenie has nothing but what you choose to give her."

"It is about that I wished to ask you."

"Oh! what to give her? Your estate is over half a million?"

"Yes, many thousands more."

"Then I think you could give her fifty thousand. That will be quite a generous gift."

"You think that generous. Then I am sorry for my sister. I fear you love money better than you love her."

"I am very fond of Steenie—" His manner changed. He looked about as if to avoid Rue's eyes. Taking up a magazine, he mechanically flapped the leaves as he continued: "Of course I am fond of Steenie; but your fortune is—"

"It is *mine now*, and I intend to settle three hundred thousand dollars upon Steenie."

"Why, that will be half of your estate. You have no right to give away half of your estate.

Three hundred thousand—why, that will take the Chicago property, which is increasing in value daily. I insist you do not sell the Chicago property."

"I will sell you what you like of the Chicago property at its present valuation, and I will give you a receipt for payment in full the day you marry Steenie."

"Marry Steenie?"

"Yes. You love Steenie; at least you love her as well as you love any one except yourself."

"I am sorry you think so, Rue."

"Oh! I have not been deceived in you—at least not since I came back to 'The Cedars' from Canada. It was the heiress you sought. I would have kept my word for the sake of your past kindness to my father; but there is now a more important question. It is not altogether because you prefer Steenie, but because Steenie loves you. She loves you, and she is the heiress. If three hundred thousand is not enough, name the *dot* you think I should give her. Some moments ago you thought fifty thousand sufficient."

"Which is hardly fair of you to say, Rue. You see there is a difference. I cannot marry

any one who has less than three hundred thousand dollars. I am restricted."

"Yes; and because of that restriction you wish the sum still larger. Well, win my sister's consent to marry you, and I will give you my note for four hundred thousand dollars that day."

"With the privilege of purchase of the Chicago property, as you suggested?"

"Yes, with that privilege." The contempt in her tone stung him at last.

"This transfer is your offer, not mine. I would have kept my engagement."

"Yes, because of the money. But I forgive you all that, and I am really glad to give this to Steenie. But I beg of you be kind and delicate with my sister. Leave all money questions out of your talk with her. Better say nothing to her of this gift. I would rather you did not."

It dawned upon him that it would be better every way to leave Steenie in ignorance of her riches. He would then have credit for disinterestedness and *entire control of the money*, which he would not have had in marrying Rue. He began to be glad and relieved at the break with Rue. Besides, he did prefer Steenie; and

he knew that he had gone beyond the point of discretion in his attention to her. Two or three people had asked him "which of the sisters was his *fiancée.*" So now when Rue offered even a very small olive-branch he was glad to accept it, particularly as she added a condition that suited his views.

"I will not tell her of the gift you make, if you wish her not to know. It is very generous, Rue, and you have a right to command me in this. I give you my word of honor I will not tell her, and I do love her. You can trust me. I will do my best to make her happy."

"Unfortunately, her happiness makes the offer necessary."

He did not know what to say, because he did not altogether understand whether this was the expression of Rue's regret for her own loss or for her sister's need. His vanity persuaded him of Rue's regret; but there was enough doubt to keep him silent, and he had enough discretion to think this the moment to seize the one fact of change and establish his new position.

"I will make her happiness my study. But I trust to keep your friendship, Rue; for Steenie's sake we must be friends."

"Yes; we must, for Steenie's sake. Now I shall say good-night. To-morrow morning will you please tell Steenie I have broken our engagement? Tell her I discovered that it was a mutual mistake. Tell only that and wait. Do not ask her to marry you, or she will understand. Leave the future to me. I will tell you when you may ask her. I will think it out to-night."

The next morning when Steenie came to the library to find her sister she found Bradnor. Rue's directions were followed; he did not blunder in the telling: "They had discovered it was a mutual mistake." It still rained steadily. At dinner Bradnor and Rue talked and laughed like old friends. Steenie, watching, saw only the possible realization of her own happiness. In the afternoon Rue asked her to postpone the visit to Richmond; and Steenie, admitting that it was "frightful weather," consented.

That evening they all spent in the drawing-room together.

Rue was an admirable actress, and the play was well played. A lovely rose-tint had come to the pale cheeks of the younger sister. The next morning the sun came out and a gaily-plumaged little "Humming-bird" was whirling

about Pike's chair, pelting the giant with Christmas roses. That day they heard that Mrs. Wilson's mother was better.

Rue had another long talk with Bradnor, and two days afterward, in the evening, a clergyman who lived near came in answer to Rue's summons and stayed all night.

Colonel Bradnor was going to New York, but after breakfast Pike's chair was rolled into the library. Leszinksky's portrait was wreathed with flowers. Fronting the picture stood his daughters, and when the question was asked, "Who giveth this woman to this man?" Rue kissed her sister's hand as she laid it in the hand of Bradnor.

The only witnesses were Bob and Pike, and the two faithful negroes who regarded as their own these orphan children—the "last of the family."

The clergyman was a venerable old man who had known Rue's grandfather. More because he was persuaded by Rue's entreaties than convinced by her arguments he had consented to perform this ceremony, which was to be kept secret until Steenie was of age, when the public marriage service would be celebrated. Rue re-

garded this as only a solemn betrothal, and so Bradnor was pledged to regard it. At noon he left them.

That evening the Wilsons returned to "The Cedars."

Steenie's happiness was very quiet, but in the light of certainty it was very complete. Bradnor was not to return to "The Cedars" until spring, but she was to go to Philadelphia the last of January, and remain there under the care of Madame Detontville, not as a pupil, but as a young lady who was preparing to enter society. In the spring it was to be announced that she was engaged to Bradnor.

CHAPTER XLI.

Why do we wait? What passenger is tardy? Let us away!

We are off, and the team goes famously since that last crack of the coachman's whip.

Before we reach the first mile-post I remember we were waiting for "Hagar."

Stop! There is no need to touch the curb or put on the brakes; the colts are tired with this long journey. Even the sight of the wished-for goal, which we can see through the long reaches of the dusty highway just beyond that ghastly gibbet, does not tempt them from their willingness to wait.

While they fill their lungs with fresh strength and the foam drops from their panting sides we can look about us and see that all is taut and strong for the rush that is coming down the stony hillside, through the rocky valley, and up to the mount of crucifixion, where the nineteenth century defies the *Christ* as it pours its red libation upon the altar of revenge.

We have not long to wait.

See! from that by-path through the cool, dewy woods, where March winds have blown away the dead leaves which covered the sleeping violets, comes our name-giver.

The rosy feet of Atalanta were not more swift than those of this "Hagar" who is flying before the bent brows of Ate. She is here! Up and on!

Hurrah, my steeds! The journey will soon be ended.

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Rosebank, March* 30, 1868.)

"THIS wild March day must have touched my spleen, I am so out of sorts. I said as much to Carisbrooke this morning, at which his superior wisdom smiled. Under the

edge of the cold smile a sneer was so perceptible that I insisted upon his explaining to me the uses and abuses of the spleen. 'Tell it not in Gath,' my Kate, 'whisper it not in Askalon'; but, truthfully, he couldn't give the slightest pretence at a rational explanation of either its use or abuse.

"*And yet these men sneer us down, my dear, with the depth and breadth of their learning!* If I was twenty years younger I would study medicine and make a specialty of the spleen.

"But while I look out of my window at leaden clouds and the shaking of things in this blustering wind you are gathering roses under sunny skies. (Which rose-gathering, now I come to think of it, is a sentimentally silly figure of speech. I do not know just what one *may* gather in Havana in March, but I suspect the rose business is a blunder. I presume Carisbrooke would know; but after that spleen split I would see him hanged before I would go a-begging bits and shreds of information from his stock.) I *do* know that you have strawberries, which are surely more edifying to the stomach than mere uneatable and sweet-scented things.

"But this trifling is not the news-letter which I intended to write.

"I shall not answer your questions in the order in which they are asked, but as the answers fit into the narrative I am about to write.

"Carson returned from Texas the 25th of January, about a week after I last wrote you. Young Wild-Cat the half-breed had gone with his uncle, Young Wild-Cat the thoroughbred, on a visit to the Zuni Indians. Carson found a letter from him here when he returned with his malaria—the only thing he gathered on the banks of the Rio Grande.

"In February Rosebank was a better sort of private hospital. First Brooke had scarlet fever, then Daisy came near dying of it. Molly and I alternated in our care of Carson and Brooke.

"Lucy, or 'Hagar,' as you will name her, devoted herself to Daisy. Day and night she watched with her. The night we thought Daisy dying the anxiety and excitement brought on one of Lucy's insane attacks. You will know what a grief this is to us all, and what a disappointment, when we had hoped she was entirely cured. The violent period did not last long; but it was succeeded by one of those silent, desponding moods, and then by one of her old sudden disappearances. We hope she is with the O'Dowds;

but I never could understand from her just where the O'Dowds live—somewhere near some railway line, not far from New York and Philadelphia. But that direction is faint indication upon which to organize a search; yet, faint as it is, it is being followed.

"We had news from France before Lucy left Rosebank which we took great care to keep from her; but Brooke has such surprising ways of acquiring bits of knowledge, and of coming out with his possessions on the most unexpected and inauspicious occasions, that it is possible she did know of Julia's death, and may have heard something of the news from Mai.

"After six weeks of marriage the marquis is a widower! I have no doubt he is consoled by the *dot*, which was the objective motive. Poor Julia! I try to forget this last folly and remember the better things of the past.

"Mai owed her much. I trust during the few days of her aunt's illness Mai paid this debt of ancient kindness.

"Captain Hartley wrote Carisbrooke of Julia's death. In his letter he repeats the promise to meet my master in New York in May. To-day Carisbrooke has sent the letter on to Robert, who

will bring his wife, and I hope you also with them, to New York. I shall go with Carisbrooke, if Molly and the babies are all well.

"The news of the *duchesse* will keep until then.

"Now I come to the court calendar in earnest —to royal intelligence.

"The 'Princess' has been here!

"Princely imperiousness and moodiness grow upon her. I think the 'Voyvoda' pines for action.

"Her royal highness is dissatisfied with the uneventful life of these piping times of peace. Being that pitiable thing—a woman—she cannot rush into the turmoil of this bespattering reconstruction business. Yet the regular and methodical life of a Virginian country gentlewoman is just as little to the taste of the '*Palatiness.*' (She would never forgive me the double *s*.)

"What our 'Princess' *does* do you shall know. I drew it from her with discreet questioning. She shoots two hours, rides half-broken thoroughbreds four, and reads six (heavy reading, mark you). Oh! I had forgotten the principal diversion. Twice a week a celebrated fencing-master goes from Washington to 'The

Cedars.' With as much aplomb and coolness as if she were talking of music and arpeggios she said: 'I used to fence well when I was with the army, and I do not care to get altogether out of practice.'

"Carson sees in all this a praiseworthy continuance in well-doing!

"He says she is the most skilful fencer he ever saw, and he raves of her quickness of eye and touch with either rapier or pistol.

"Thank Heaven for Molly's plain, womanly sense! *She* will save my granddaughters from an education on the Palatine plan. But then one never knows. The remote ancestor may break out in time, may push himself into the present with all the vagaries of the dark or the middle ages. We are never safe from these reproductions.

"See these daughters of Stanislaus Leszinksky? They do not at all resemble each other, nor do they resemble their father.

"Steenie may be something like her mother; I rather think she is in the diplomatic way she has of getting all the good things she covets and in her affections, which are only spongy absorbents. My admirable son-in-law forgets the pro-

prieties and the commandments when he refers to the slow torture of Stanislaus Leszinksky's life with Steenie's mother.

"To tell my news of Steenie and have that off my memorandum of questions I will tell you now where she is. Why, at that lovely polishing shop of Madame Detontville's in Philadelphia—the school which gave the *duchesse* the finishing touches of pretty deceits and disgusted the 'Princess' with all approach thereunto. Its effect upon Steenie will be an interesting study.

"Rue has not a look of Margaret about her, nor, so far as I can see, any of her qualities. If there is any Saxon modification it has come from the hot-blooded Macdonalds, which has had no cooling or taming effect upon the kingly Polish current.

"Yet the 'Princess' has grand qualities of her own, but they are not all of the modern conventional Cartaret type, though even Margaret varied from that type.

"You Cartarets *are* conventionalists. You know it is true, Kate. That bugaboo the world has chained you for years to—I remember and I ask pardon; I promised you to say no more of that *mistake of yours*.

"To go back to the other Cartarets. Your father was a formalist in his ideas of women. He thought they should live, move, and have their being inside of fixed and narrowly-limited rules. Even Margaret's womanly independence—which was always subject to her affection—was a thorn to his conventionalism; as, in fact, it would have been to her own father.

"But Rue?

"Why, if old Colonel Tom could hear the crack of her pistol practice, or have a fearful vision of that French fencing-master and his foils at 'The Cedars,' he would 'revisit the glimpses of the moon' and speak his mind in those classic objurgations for which he was so celebrated when the occasion was great or urgent.

"But the Cartaret men were not singular in their womanology.

"Most Virginians—*the thinking males, bien entendu*—had, and yet have, badly-mixed ideas concerning the 'weaker sex' and the training needed to make them those composite constructions of angelical feminine excellences which the Virginian man is bound by tradition to admire. Their theories of women—if such vague wanderings of untethered thought can be called

theories—were made up of saws from Solomon and the sentimentalities of the Troubadours.

"Not that I object to this modern stealing from Solomon, but the Proverbs and the light philosophy of the gentle King René's singers are not the affinities a wise alchemist would put in the caldron were he compounding that subtle essence of perfection, a perfect woman.

"Moreover, the Virginian notions—they are too crude to be called aught else—are utterly unscientific; they force the butterfly—in other words, the Troubadouric young woman who is shrined where she can be sighed at and sung to —back into a grub.

"Music, poetry, and tender sentiment are the girl's nutriment; the lover's sighs are breathed into the pearly shells of sound until the rosebud mouth murmurs 'yes.'

"Then when the honeymoon has waxed and waned Cupid kisses his finger-tips and his mother's doves bear him away from the butterfly, who folds her wings as she creeps into the grub-cover and crawls through the daily routine of the 'saw' formula. And so the destructive process of this backward evolution goes on, or will go on until good comes out of evil.

"I am in the Cassandra vein, my Kate. The spirit of prophecy is upon me.

"The future and only possible restoration of the feminine grub to a more scientific and pleasing transition was assured by 'our *late unpleasantness.*'

"There will be protracted philanthropic and corrupt political effort to establish race-equality in the reunited States; but the quixotism of philanthropy and the greed of the politician cannot overturn the everlasting processes of Nature. Her scales are gradual and harmonious in adjustment.

"Woman is the melodic expression of race. Barbaric melodies are simple utterances. A perfect melody is the thought which governs harmonious expression.

"Do you see my climax, Kate? When races are finally adjusted with the dominant Caucasian in place, then that great she, NATURE, will crown the lesser she, WOMAN.

"I might have said it in fewer words, which would also have smacked of common sense. I will try it again.

"Every effort for change and for free thought is a lift, *after the mistakes are mended.* The

mistake of giving the uneducated and race-incapacitated negro political equality with the white man will right itself in proving the inequality of race and the equality of sex.

"You know, Kate, I am not an extremist—one reason may be the sticking quality of Virginian conservatism—but I do hope that change may follow close upon the heels of change, until the balance of sex is so adjusted that the moral influence of woman may be as effective in public affairs as her sympathetic tastes are now in social life.

"I am not an optimistic female-suffragist. I do not think that the political enfranchisement of woman would bring the millennium. But I believe it would save and rehabilitate hundreds of thousands who are now besotted and vicious destructives of themselves and of society. I believe it would do many things which all past civilization has failed to accomplish. I believe it would reform the drunkard in treating him as an irresponsible invalid and restraining him from the personal liberty which injures him, and from citizenship which injures others, until he is clothed and in his right mind. This in itself would be an immense step in the reformation of the law-making element.

"I have no doubt that men would be the first beneficiaries of sex-equality. The faithfulness, the devotion, the gratitude, the maternal instinct of woman would make that sure. Men would have early and full payment for the tardy justice given their sisters. But the benefits would all be retroactive.

"Behind every drunkard and every criminal there are women who suffer. Uplift the drunkard and the criminal and you release these unfortunates. I do not believe the wildest visionary can overestimate the moral force the world would gain through such an uplifting.

"Think of it, my Kate! It would make the modern Hagar impossible.

"Here I have been rushing into a discussion—following one of my vagaries, Carisbrooke would say—and leaving my news to crystallize. I will give you the broken remainder in condensed and highly cencentrated globules.

"*The 'Princess' has broken with Bradnor!!*

"Her determination to sell the Chicago and St. Louis property Robert has probably told you of, as his consent was given upon condition of Carson's consent. She fought this out with Carson and won. She wishes to settle the money on

Steenie. And for some mysterious reason which he will not tell, but which is to be explained in May after that settlement of yours, Carson was willing she should divide her fortune with her sister.

"Carson was so ill he could not go with Rue to St. Louis and Chicago, but he sent one of his aids as escort.

"That aid is an aspirant for royal favor, but he will come to grief.

"The 'Princess' is not matrimonially inclined.

"The 'Princess' brought Oscar with her, and then sent him to New York to find the O'Dowds and get news of Lucy. She also wrote to Dr. Wilson to send Stearns to meet Oscar and assist in the search for Lucy. They both knew the O'Dowds and have a certain intelligence as trailers. How they will succeed in a closely-settled country remains to be shown.

"Of course Carson and Rue have faith in frontier craft. Stearns is really very intelligent, and both the men are loyal and devoted to the 'Princess.'

"Rue promised to return here the first of next month. Now she writes as if doubtful: 'Chicago affairs are detaining her.'

"It seems Bradnor met her in Chicago ! !

"I asked Carson if that meant re-engagement. He said 'No!' very decidedly, but would not explain.

"*I think I can guess the riddle, and that the answer is*, STEENIE !"

CHAPTER XLII.

"O world! so few the years we live,
Would that the life which thou dost give
Were life indeed!"

RUE'S stay in St. Louis was not long. The property there had been bought in her own right since her majority and its sale was easily effected.

But the Chicago affairs had gone badly.

First there was a personal matter which disturbed the "Princess." The inconsiderate aid obtruded sentiment, forgetting his position as business escort, and was immediately placed in the list of the rejected. To stay on in pain and awkwardness or to leave abruptly were the two horns of the dilemma. Bradnor's arrival was a fortunate excuse and release to the discomfited officer. He returned to Cincinnati, and Rue's good-fortune seemed to go with him. Mrs. Carisbrooke had sent her maid with Rue; and the detention, which she feared would inconvenience Mrs. Carisbrooke, was another worry.

In the business affairs were the vexatious delays and quibbles of the law. The written and attested consent of her trustees could not do away with certain technical objections to Rue's signature to sales of "the Cartaret estate" property. The finality of ownership was yet unsettled, and the balance of legal opinion was against the validity of title not executed by the trustees. The majority of counsel consulted held that if Rue died unmarried and childless even the accrued interest, invested by the trustees, would revert to the heirs named in Colonel Cartaret's will, although the firm acting for Bradnor, one of the shrewdest and most successful in the management of real estate, held a directly opposite opinion.

The imperious temper of the "Princess" ill brooked these daily discussions, and she was about to postpone it all until the next summer, when General Carson and Mr. Robert Carisbrooke could be present, when Bradnor proposed to buy the property directly from her, "*provided the doubt in the title was considered in the price.*"

With a royal look of contempt for his miserly prudence the "Princess" consented to sell him

all the Chicago property of the Cartaret estate for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which was less than half its actual value. She receipted for the payment of the Chicago property, and added one hundred thousand dollars from the St. Louis fund and her note for fifty thousand, thus completing the payment of the sum she had promised to give her sister.

After Rue's settlement with Bradnor she had a balance left from the St. Louis money which she had brought with her to Chicago of thirty thousand dollars in United States gold certificates. She declined to exchange them, as Bradnor suggested, for a check on New York.

All these transactions had intensified Rue's growing contempt and dislike for her young sister's husband. She had left him at his lawyer's rooms and walked from Madison Street to a bookseller's in State Street, where she bought some books and a small Russia-leather handsatchel, which was to have her initials engraved upon the clasp and be sent to her at the Sherman House in an hour. In the little hallway of the ladies' entrance to the hotel she met Bradnor.

"I was waiting to see you, Rue. It is impos-

sible for me to go on to New York before to-morrow night. Do you mind waiting?"

"I mind it very much. In fact, I cannot wait. I am already two weeks late, and the Wilsons, I know, are impatient for my return. But that need make no difference to you. I will have to stop two days in New York, and I shall see you there."

"Then will you go on to-night?"

"Yes."

"But the train starts at eight o'clock; it is now half-past five."

"I shall be ready."

"Then you will not go by Cincinnati?"

"No; the maid I brought from Doctor Carisbrooke's would be unwilling to go to New York, and, besides, Mrs. Carisbrooke might be inconvenienced. She can go on to Cincinnati from Fort Wayne. From there I shall do quite well alone. I presume Oscar will be at the New York Hotel when I reach New York. I directed him to wait there, so I will have some one to look after the luggage."

"Very well; I will telegraph the New York Hotel people to send to meet your train. Shall I get you tickets by the Erie Road?"

"Yes."

It cost her an effort to accept even this slight courtesy, and she was glad to be free from his further presence.

She only half listened as Bradnor said: "You had better take the girl on with you to Crestline. She will then have no change to make between that and Cincinnati, and you will have her with you to-night."

"Very well; I would rather have her to-night."

"I wish you would wait."

"No; a short experience of self-dependence will do me good."

Bradnor started to make arrangements for her journey, and Rue went directly to her rooms, where the maid was waiting.

"We are going in two hours. You will be with me to-night, and you can go home from Crestline. Are you ready?"

"Yes, Miss Rue; everything is packed except this plain travelling-dress which I kept out. Is this the one you wanted?"

"Yes; it is loose and comfortable. We have one change to make, and I do not wish to undress. I can go through in this. O Mary! here

is a roll of notes I want to carry safely; my pocket might be picked, and it will not do to risk them in the luggage. What can you do?"

"I can easily sew them in the upper part of the facing of your dress, Miss Rue. The facing is stiff and heavy, and I can get a thin piece of muslin and lay the bills smooth in that, and then they will never show under the facing; the heavy plaits on the outside will hide them perfectly."

"Very well. Do not unpack to get the things needed; you can buy them at the little shop across the street."

Before Bradnor returned their preparations were complete and Rue and the maid had dined. They had still an hour to wait. Rue wrote to Steenie and to Carson. She had just directed the letters when the carriage was announced.

At Crestline the maid left Rue. She took a parcel to the Carisbrookes and the letter to Carson.

She remembered afterward every detail of the sleeping car in which she had arranged Miss Rue's travelling-shawls and packages. She knew the young lady had taken the two sections just opposite each other through to New York,

that she might not be annoyed by neighbors. The girl told that she had said laughingly:

"I shall have a sitting-room and a bedroom. I can change with the sunlight and will not be disturbed. Do not lose that parcel or yourself. Be sure you get on the right train."

"Yes, Miss Rue; I will get home all right with the parcels."

Mary always broke down in the next sentence: "I thanked her for her generous gifts and said good-by; and as the train left she looked from the window to see me go back to the waiting-room. The last word I heard was, 'You must come with Mrs. Carson next summer to "The Cedars."'"

The train rushed on eastward. At the station where they stopped for dinner the conductor came to Rue. "Yes," she preferred to get out. The conductor left her in the dining-room. He was called out by some one. Rue, feeling a little nervous in her new condition of "self-dependence," only drank a cup of coffee and hurried back to find her place.

A pale, delicate girl, whose worn but neat clothing told a story that touched Rue's sympathy, was walking on the long platform, halt-

ing with a tired, weary air to look in the different windows. Rue stopped. The chance to assist another strengthened her self-dependence.

"Have you lost your place? Can you not find the car?"

"I have no place yet, and I do not know where to find one. I am alone."

"So am I; come with me."

The look of thanks, the glad relief expressed in the sad face, increased Rue's interest in her new-found protégée.

"Where are you going?"

"To New York. My only brother is ill there in the hospital."

Just then they reached the sleeping-car; the girl hesitated.

"My ticket is not for a sleeping-car; I shall have to go back to one of the cars we have passed."

"No, you will not go back. I have a double section. I had a"—she caught back the word before it was uttered, and went on—"young girl with me from Chicago, but she got off this morning; you can have her place. I assure you it is no extra expense. I have taken these places

through to New York, and I will be very glad to have you come. It will be a favor to me."

The frank manner and the kind face decided the girl. In a few moments they were seated and the guest was made at home. Before evening the "Princess" had in her own thought adopted another inmate for "The Cedars."

The puzzle was just what position to offer the stranger, who, it was evident, was well brought up. It was just as evident that her health and hopes had been shattered in a long struggle with want.

In the evening Rue opened the luncheon-basket Mary had filled for her in Chicago. They had quite a merry little supper, and a faint color came into the pale cheeks. The delicately-cooked game, the white rolls, and the red Bordeaux were the medicines the invalid needed. Rue's resolution of adoption grew stronger.

After supper the outline of the story she wanted to hear was voluntarily told to her. Two orphan children had been left with a maiden aunt who taught in a village school on Long Island to win bread for herself and her dead sister's children. Then the boy got a place about the railroad station, and his little earnings helped. The aunt

broke down at her work and the young people were the care-takers. The brother was advanced gradually and transferred from time to time to different places. When the aunt died he was conductor on a freight-train running through from New York to Chicago. He brought his sister West, where she tried teaching, but it made her nervous and ill. Then she did what plain sewing she could get; her scant earnings helped pay for the extra expense of frequent illness. Her brother did all he could for her, but it was evident to Rue that to save him the girl had fought the battle alone as far as she could. Now it was the brother who was down—"malarial fever."

"The hospital nurse wrote me that day and night he talks of me. I had my aunt's watch, and that and some housekeeping things I sold brought enough to take me to New York; but you see I will not have much left, so I have to be economical."

The "Princess" thought with delight of that roll of gold certificates under her dress-plaits.

Then she told the story of *her* life and "its household cares" (Mrs. Carisbrooke would have thought that meant a target missed or a foil

broken); that her steward (Bob!!) "needed an assistant," and she wished a "housekeeper who would also be a companion," adding with a smile:

"But we will talk of all that in New York with your brother. I have a severe headache and you are tired. I intend to order you to bed."

"Let me brush your hair. My aunt used to say my fingers were magnetic; possibly I can relieve your headache."

To please her Rue consented. The girl brushed the heavy masses of hair, and then softly pressed Rue's throbbing temples with her cool hands.

"There," said Rue, "thank you, my head is better; now you must go to bed."

The porter came to arrange the couch. Rue had her guest's made up, but preferred her own as it was. She could not sleep, and she wanted to open the window if she should feel faint. She had been liberal in her gratuities, and the porter said he would come later and arrange the couch if it was wanted.

Rue was sitting by the window when the train stopped at Binghamton. When the door near her opened she heard a familiar voice talking

with the porter, and the old clergyman, her neighbor at "The Cedars," entered. There was a warm hand-shaking, a few inquiries, Rue's short explanation of her delay at Chicago, and the rector's explanation of his unexpected visit to Binghamton to see an old parishioner. He had been in Philadelphia on some church business, and "could not refuse to make this detour to see his friend on his way to New York." Then, with good-nights and the expectation of further talk in the morning, they parted.

This unexpected meeting did not help Rue to quiet rest. It brought back her rash decision and the regrets that were beginning to haunt her. "Had she done well to give Steenie to Bradnor? She was such a mere child she might have outgrown her first love." Then Rue thought with terror of the possibilities of Steenie's future disenchantment in this love-match. "Have I only ruined her life in my overhaste to make her happy? And is not this concealment of the marriage and her separation from her husband still more dangerous? Would it not have been better to have told General Carson and the Carisbrookes? If Steenie"—but she dared not think of the possibility of Steenie's love changing.

Rue's temples were throbbing and hot, and she got up to go to the dressing-room and bathe her face and head. As she was leaving her seat her guest called:

"Are you ill? Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes," said Rue. "You can take care of these things for me. It is somewhat of a risk to leave them on the seat. I am going to bathe my forehead. I have great faith in the water-cure."

And Rue put the satchel she had bought in Chicago in the girl's berth. She had taken off her watch to put in it, but there was some difficulty with the clasp, and she thrust it under her guest's pillow, saying, as she took off her rings and gave them to her to keep:

"I shall not have the trouble of drying them. Do not try to keep awake. I may go to the door and see what fresh, unpoisoned air will do. It is fearfully close here, and the old lady next me begged me to close my window."

"I am so sorry for your head, and so sorry I can do nothing for you when you have been so kind, so good to me!"

And the sensitive mouth trembled, and the soft blue eyes swam in misty light as they looked in the face which was bending down above them.

Rue kissed the tender eyes and whispered softly:

"Sleep now. To-morrow I will go with you to your brother. A fairy has told me that your troubles are nearly ended. Sleep and be happy!"

After bathing her face Rue wrapped about her a light shawl she had taken from the package Mary had strapped together, and opened the door.

It was the rear car, and the brakeman had gone forward. Afraid of fresh complaint of the draught, she stepped out on the platform and pulled the door shut behind her.

The damp night air—it was raining a sleety, drizzly rain—chilled her. She had been holding to the iron rail; as she let go to turn to the door behind her the car rocked violently to one side and threw her on the steps. She caught at the railing—missing it, she fell from the car. It was her last moment of consciousness. The rebound sent her over the edge of the low embankment, and she rolled down the muddy declivity into a rough country road, striking heavily against the jagged top of a low stump, which threw her back a little to one side.

The accident to Rue was only the prelude to

one not yet forgotten. At Carr's Rock the train went over a high embankment. Fire and water fought each other for the victims who were fastened in and under the wreck. It was hours before help came to them.

The screams of agony from the sleeping-car were hushed before the flames were extinguished.

A few of the charred dead were recognized by their friends. The "parishioner from Binghamton" found the remains of his old pastor. The baggage of Miss Leszinksky was on the train, and after the day's search was over a charred skeleton with three rings on the burnt fingers was found alone in a section. Beneath the disfigured corpse a watch and chain were almost fused by the heat, but when forced open the watch had the letters "R. L." beneath the arms of Poland. The rings had the same initials. In a pool of water beneath the car a Russia-leather satchel was discovered. It contained papers and memoranda not entirely destroyed belonging to Miss Leszinksky.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us."

IT was a rugged, barren hill not many miles from where that disaster occurred at Carr's Rock. Here and there patches were sparsely scattered of dark hemlock and stunted bushes of glossy-leaved laurels.

In some few hollows to the south hardy grasses had matted their roots and covered the thin soil with the long strips of tender, delicate green which proved that Spring had gone northward. She had but touched the rocky ridge; but down in the valleys between the hills and in the meadows by the river the vegetation said that May had come.

On this high summit, which commanded a view of the distant stretches of the twisted chain of hills belonging to the three different States through which the Delaware carries its waters to the bay, one could only feel the warm breath of May as it blew the rifted clouds eastward.

It was still early morning. On the very topmost point of the hill, near where three dwarfed hemlocks held together, somewhat sheltered by a huge rock which had defended the young trees from the strong northwest winds until their branches were tall enough to look over their protector, Oscar was lying, watching the railway station he could see in the river valley.

The negro looked worn with grief and fatigue. In his face a hopeless despair was lit by occasional flashes of fierce rage.

He had in his hand field-glasses, which he turned from the station to the long, curving railway track, and from time to time to the Port Jervis road on the ridge beneath.

Suddenly he heard behind him the fall of stones loosened by feet which were climbing the hillside. He sprang up and walked rapidly downward to meet the climber.

"O Marse Bob! I begun to be afeard you wahn't ever a-gwine to come. I thought may be—" He stopped abruptly.

"You thought may be I was drunk?" Stearns paused a moment, but as Oscar made no reply he continued: "And you'd a-thought right, if it hadn't a-been fur one thing: jus' when I was

a-gettin' a good start fur it I seen Captain Hartley."

The negro threw up his hand with a hoarse bellow of rage.

"Keep still, Oscar. You jus' keep your balance, and this time we'll git him. He's always had the whip-hand on us befo'; but to-day he'll lose the full he's a-bettin' on. The devil's got pressin' bizness on hand somewhars else, and he ain't a-lookin' arfter his pet. I'll rest here fur ten minutes and tell you whar I met up with him. Then we must be off. Set down, Oscar, *or* I won't say anuther word. Set down, I tell you! You'll want all the strength that's in you fur the walk that's a-comin', and may be a fight arfter we find out what he's a-doin'."

The negro sat down and Stearns began:

"Well, you see, I got to New York befo' nine o'clock yesteddy mornin', and I told General Carson that we'd jus' circled 'round and 'round Port Jervis and found nothin' of Lucy or the O'Dowds. And I asked him if he had hearn anything. But he hadn't, excep' that Capin Hartley was somewhar about New York.

"General Carson thought may be I'd better stop once mo' at Port Jervis and see that detec-

tive he's got thar. Now, I ain't never b'lieved in that feller no way—an eddicated cuss that's been two weeks a-lookin' fur the O'Dowds, arfter Mrs. Carson done sent him the name of that drug-man in Port Jervis what put his sign and the town on the bottle of cam*phire* and the little box that was in Lucy's room. I wonder what the Big Chief would a-thought of such a trailer? Why, he'd lose hisself an' find nobody, if he was on a war-path; and that's what this is like to be.

"Well, I asked him like the general told me, and he hadn't got a bit furder in the bizness than he was befo' the trouble 'bout Capin Rue; then, you know—well, that week I got drunk.

"Onless Mrs. Leszinksky had a-come down herself all the angels in heaven couldn't a-held me sober when I saw them cars and what was left of the little baby I had helped save from the flood and the Injuns.

"But I mustn't think o' her like that when this villain's to trap, else I'll get off agin. You see when Capin Rue died my pledge-time was up. That was the time I promised fur. I swore that as long as a Leszinksky lived that keered fur me to quit liquor I'd quit. An' she was the

last—the last that keered; fur Miss Steenie's married, and she ain't like a Leszinksky nohow. *She* wouldn't keer if I eternally stayed drunk.

"I suppose, anyway, I would a-got sober on and off. I'd a-had to, if the devils had a-got me like they did in the Injun country. But I would a-gone at the bizness systematic, if General Carson hadn't a-got it in his head, and a-put it in mine and yourn, that Hartley had a hand in this devil's work here at Carr's Rock. *You* wahn't hard of b'lievin'. I don't know as you or the general would a-thought o' this if you hadn't hearn that young Mr. Stan saved that scoundrel of a Marten from drownin' the time you throwed him in the river.

"That was what made General Carson think Marten and Marten's master was at the bottom o' this.

"But my ten minutes is 'most up and I ain't finished my story. I must hurry it. The detective hadn't l'arnt anything. So I went to that tavern thar by the railroad in Port Jervis, you know, where we stayed when we went to see all that was lef' us of Capin Rue. And like as not—fur I was disapp'inted and bothered—I'd a-been cl'ar drunk to-day; but jus' as I was a-thinkin'

I couldn't do nothin' and would take a drink I saw Hartley ridin' out this way.

"I know'd him in a minute. He ain't got over the dragoon way o' ridin'—none of 'em ever does. More 'an that, I could tell that sneerin', hooked nose of his in a million.

"Thar was a country feller at the tavern jus' gettin' in his buggy to come out a piece this way. I paid him five dollars to bring me and follow the man I was arfter. I told him 'twas a man what owed me somethin', and I told the truth. I'm a-goin' to git my pay now.

"Hartley rode fast, and we arfter him as fast as we could. I meant to keep him in sight till I got close by here—I know'd you would be a-watchin' here—and then I meant to come fur you—"

"I'm ready, Marse Bob. Whar is he?"

"Befo' I tell you, you mus' make me a promise."

"I'm a-gwine to kill him, Marse Bob. When I lets him loose he won't live over it like Marten did. If the Lord 'ill only d'liver him into my han's onct I never will let him go out ov 'em alive."

"Now, you see, Oscar, that's jus' whar you always was a fool. *You* ain't in God a-Mighty's

secrets. He ain't a-keepin' folks to d'liver 'em into your hands. When he gets through with a rascal—and I'm free to say he handles a good many of 'em—he's got a place fur 'em and a special jailer of his own. Leastways 'most on the church folks do so b'lieve, 'cep' Pike.

"Pike's allus willin' to let a sinner go in on God's marcy. He ain't mean or stingy with Kingdom-come. He b'lieves in free givin', and he lives up to what he b'lieves.

"But to come back to what we was a-sayin'. Now, if you're a-goin' to rush in and do the devil's bizness I ain't a-goin' to tell you whar the job is a-waitin'. So you'll jus' make me let that scoundrel off agin."

"Marse Bob, I can't make no blin' promise 'bout that man. He's done me harm 'nough. And 'ithout talkin' o' me, thar's Lucy's 'count with him waitin'. Marse Carson b'lieves and I b'lieve he had somethin' to do with that broke rail on the track thar whar Miss Rue was killed. I'll tell you the truth, Marse Bob—I'm a-goin' to kill him."

The negro's eyes were ablaze, and the last sentence seemed to escape unconsciously through his shut teeth.

"Well, go and find him!" said Bob, and he threw himself full length upon the ground, as if he meant to stay there. Oscar looked about uneasily. He watched the road with quick glances, varied by an occasional appealing look at the impassive Stearns. At last he said:

"What do you want me to promise, Marse Bob?"

Bob rose up slowly and brushed off the hemlock leaves that were sticking in his clothing; then he turned to Oscar.

"Now you're a-comin' to your senses agin'. You mus' promise me not to kill Capin Hartley, 'less we get in a fight whar we're a-goin', and I say to you that we must take him alive or kill him. You see if I ketch him sich a way that I've got the drap on him—the proof General Carson wants—why, then *I'll keep him or kill him.* He sha'n't git away then; and somehow I count on findin' him and Marten, and proofs o' what they've been a-doin'. But if I don't see cl'ar the right on it, and if I say to you that he's to go back scot-free, why, you mus' promise to let him go."

Bob rested his appeal; the negro still hesi-

tated. More hopeful from Oscar's silence, Bob commenced anew:

"You see, Oscar, we *mus'* have proofs. General Carson's a-waitin' in New York for Hartley, and he's in as big a stew as you is to get some 'scuse to fight the villain if we can't hang him. But all that's a-wantin' is proofs; and if you'll do like I say, why, we'll get 'em and hang *him*, which I'm free to say is a mean, unsoldier-like way to finish a man. But then this scoundrel ain't no better 'n a dog."

"It's hard, Marse Bob—hard, but I promise."

"You sw'ar you won't kill him 'cep' I tell you. Mind, I leaves you free from your promise if we finds him in some villany whar he mus' be took or let go. You sw'ar?"

"Yes, Marse Bob, I sw'ar by the Lord's vengeance I won't touch him 'cep' you tell me."

Bob held out his hand, which Oscar clasped.

"Now, Oscar, we're all right. I can 'pend on your word, which is mo' 'an I'd say fur some white folks. Now I'll tell you the balance of my findin's. Capin Hartley stayed at that tavern down thar all night." He pointed to a house in the distance. "I'd a-come fur you in the night, but I was 'fraid may be Marten would come and

they'd be off while I was away. So I stayed about in the yard, and in the kitchen, and then in the stable. The little sleep I got I took listenin'.

"I crep' up to the porch whar Hartley was a-talkin' with the landlord jus' 'fore he went to bed. I tell you it giv' me a start all over when I heard him ask the landlord 'if he knew any Irish folks up in the ridge above thar named O'Dowd.' And the landlord said yes, and told him whar-'bouts the place was and how to go.

"When daylight come and Marten hadn't I know'd I must be off. Hartley hadn't moved—I had been a-watchin' his room. The people was jus' gettin' up when I lef' thar. It's a pretty good walk, fur I come 'round through the woods the way the landlord told Hartley to go. I wanted to see which way he was a-goin'. It was a good thing I did. I know now how we can cross the ridge here and get thar befo' he does. I ain't a-goin' in till he comes. I don't want to skeer off whoever is a-waitin' fur him; mos' like it's Marten. We must take the p'ints of the place and get close up. He ain't started yet. They was a-goin' to feed his horse and he'll mos' like eat his breakfast. Now we'll be off."

Bob had got his bearing, and an hour's fast

walk brought them in sight of the place. They had gone through woods and fields until they could see the old house. Then they crossed the road by which Hartley must come. In the road they met a countryman driving a wagon down toward the tavern. Bob questioned him. "Yes, the O'Dowds live about a mile and a half away; go the straight road—not this; that to the right there—until you pass a bridge over a branch, and then right along by the railroad track, and you'll see where to turn up the hill to the house."

They walked on a short distance until the man was out of sight, and then they climbed the fence and went up the ridge so that they could not be seen from the road. They soon came upon a path which led them to a wooded hill behind the house. There was only a shelving ravine to cross, in which they would be sheltered by thick masses of laurel which screened the path from sight. Before they descended into the ravine Bob took the field-glass and inspected the house.

"Yes, Oscar, we're all right; we've come in right behind the place. We can get close up to that chimney thar 'ithout seein' anybody. Hartley's got to come 'round by the railroad and up the hill in front. You must watch fur him thar at

the corner of the house whar the fence begins, while I crawl through them low bushes and see if thar's anybody in that old shed or if we can get in. It's a mighty good thing fur us thar ain't no winders this side of the house. Now, don't make no noise in the bushes. Go up by the chimney. You can get 'round to the corner by the fence arfterwards."

They cautiously went down the ravine, and still more slowly and silently climbed up to the spot Bob had selected. The path which they had quitted led around an old tumble-down shed to the left.

The chimney was nearer the corner to the right where Oscar was to be stationed.

Bob motioned to Oscar to stop, and crept past the negro to the fence. He had thought of an unconsidered possibility. Hartley might not have waited for breakfast, and he might be there.

At the corner of the house he could not see the front yard. He went a little farther and was climbing upon the fence when he saw a horse hitched at the post down the hill. Suddenly there was the sound of a shot in the house, of a woman's shriek, and the duller noise of a heavy

fall. Bob sprang over the fence as he called "Oscar," and then rushed around to the door. At the same instant a woman with a shawl about her head ran around in the opposite direction from which Bob was coming and behind the shed. Before Bob was on the steps Oscar had overtaken him. Bob pushed back the door, which the flying woman had left partly open.

The men stopped motionless as if they had seen a ghost.

In a low bed in one corner of the room a woman had thrown back the covers and was sitting upright.

She had a pistol in her hand and was looking down at a man lying motionless on the floor.

The room had no furniture except this roughly-made couch, an unpainted table, and two or three chairs. There were a few chips burning on the hearth.

Between the fireplace and the bed was a strip of woollen carpeting. On that the man was lying.

Bob and Oscar had recognized the woman at the first glance.

It was Rue.

The man was Hartley, and he was shot through the head.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Twelve just men sat in judgment upon a sinner and committed murder.

THE personality of those in authority must be dealt with discreetly, so I shall not say in which of the three States already indicated this scene was acted.

It was a hot, breezeless day the first week in June. The court-room of the little country town was crowded. This was the third day of the trial of the man who had been apprehended for the murder of Captain Hartley.

The defence had been admirably conducted, but from first to last they fought a losing fight. Every point of evidence was against the prisoner at the bar. Even his character as proved by the defence warranted belief in the possibility of his having committed the crime with which he was charged. General Carson, a witness for the defence, had to admit in the cross-examination "that the prisoner was quarrelsome, and even dangerous, when he had been drinking." And

the testimony of the witnesses for the prosecution left no doubt that he had been drinking hard two weeks before the murder.

The prosecution in the summing-up dwelt upon the facts proved. They repeated the statement that "the prisoner at the bar was taken red-handed in the commission of the crime." They insisted that—

"Not a link has failed in the chain of evidence. Every witness called by the defence has helped to unravel the motive of the crime and fasten the guilt upon the accused. Motive and opportunity are proved, and the murderer was arrested as he was disposing of the body of his victim. It is possible that an accessory escaped, but that is immaterial to the conviction of the prisoner. He came alone from New York to Port Jervis. He was at the station when Captain Hartley arrived. He seemed to be sure of the coming of his victim. He watched for him, then he followed him. He told the witness who drove with him from Port Jervis to the 'Valley Tavern' that 'the man he was following owed him a debt which he intended to force him to pay.' In one sense the threatening words were true. It was the debt of revenge the prisoner at the bar intended to collect. That

was proved in the testimony of the gallant officer who has so reluctantly told the story of the prisoner's old grudge against an officer who had punished him for drunkenness. But the most damning evidence is that of the witness who went with him from Port Jervis: '*He did not want to overtake the man we were following; he said he only wanted to keep him in sight; and when we saw him dismount at the tavern the prisoner paid me and sent me back, saying "he would walk on to the house after it grew darker."*'

"Then we have the testimony of the landlord and of his sons. They could not induce the prisoner to come into the house to his supper. He ate it and paid for it out in the yard. One of the boys saw him walk around the house and lean against the porch railing, where he could hear the landlord giving directions to Captain Hartley as to the route he was to take going to O'Dowd's. The prisoner had known the O'Dowds in the West, and it is certain he knew where they lived, for the next witness is the one who met him in the road the next morning—the morning Captain Hartley was last seen alive—not two miles from O'Dowd's and not two hundred yards from where he murdered Captain Hartley, and

where he was arrested the next day: a secluded, secret spot, fit scene of crime, where he was replanting the laurel beneath which he had hidden his victim. The negro whom the witness saw with him may have been an accomplice, but that does not lessen the guilt of the man we have traced step by step to the scene of the murder.

"But there, at the grave into which the coffinless corpse was hurriedly thrown, a watchful Providence gives a final attestation of the prisoner's guilt. The last proof—the evidence which fastens the deed upon the murderer—is furnished at that supreme moment by the prisoner himself. He resisted arrest, and when overpowered and searched a recently-discharged pistol is found upon him. Skilled experts tell us the ball taken from the brain of the victim was shot from that derringer—shot by some one close behind the man he murdered. The scorched and bloodless wound was made by an unseen enemy. Gentlemen of the jury, if the act had been committed in the presence of witnesses the evidence could not have been more clear and conclusive, but the crime would have been less. It would not then have been a cold-blooded assassination."

During the summing-up of the prosecution the

prisoner had followed the argument with constant, unwearied attention; yet in the interest which he exhibited there seemed no personal solicitude. It was as if he were listening to a puzzle addressed to others, to a riddle which they must guess. Once or twice there was a triumphant glance in the reddish-brown eyes as the prosecutor fixed the attention of the jury with the perfectness of the cumulative evidence. It was as if he won a victory in the very exhibition of the proofs which were likely to convict him.

Two or three times during the trial, at some queer expression of one of the frightened countrymen, who were badgered into self-contradiction and plucked of the truths they unconsciously withheld, Bob laughed outright. It was a rolling, full, mellow, infectious laugh, and called always a hearty, responsive echo from the audience, who would laugh with him and then look at him in half-surprised and half-stolid amazement, wondering how a man could laugh at words which struck at his life.

Ah! they did not know that the last heavy heartache of Bob's life ended when he found that "Capin Rue" had not died in that horrible furnace.

Still less could they understand that his anxiety for her further safety was quieted by his own danger.

Carson and Pike, who had come as soon as they knew of his arrest to do all they could to save or to console him, did not know how to read Bob's newly-recovered brightness. For not even to Carson or Pike had he told the story of Rue's escape.

Poor Bob had very clouded ideas of law and justice. He knew a man could only once be put in peril of his life by his trial on a criminal accusation, and through some twist of reasoning he believed that when law once found a victim and condemned him law was satisfied with the forfeit the victim paid.

Believing this, the vindictive eloquence of the prosecutor was a positive delight to Bob. After one of the most bitterly accusative bursts of that zealous official he was somewhat startled by the prisoner's look of serene content.

From the day of his incarceration in the jail Stearns had refused to utter a word of explanation in his own defence. At the moment of his arrest he had knocked down a constable. But when he heard a bystander say, "Let us help

the officer; the proof is plain this man has committed a murder," Bob's humor instantly changed from rage to gentleness. After that instant his only fear was that Oscar, hearing of his danger, would return, and then the fact that Rue was living and that she had killed Hartley would be known. He had risked life to save her more than once. Why should he hesitate now? He had an instinctive horror of hanging; but then, he asked himself, what was his hanging to her danger?

He had been one of that military guard in Washington just after the war when a woman was hung—a woman upon whom only the shadow of a crime was thrown; a woman believed to be innocent at the time, and afterwards proved to have been innocent. Night and day for the few weeks before his trial Bob thought of that horrible execution—hurried on to appease a vengeful cry which only hushed after the hangman tied his fatal knot about the throat of the condemned. He remembered the woman's pallid face with its crown of gray hair, and how the assistants had lifted the limp, trembling body and carried her, already dying, to the gallows.

Yes; why should he not laugh and be glad as this trial went on?

The child of the dearest friends he had ever known, the child he loved with all the devotion and singleness of heart which characterized his simple, faithful nature, would be saved through his conviction.

What mattered his death, if it purchased a dearer life? Why, if he had a hundred lives he would have given them all that a Leszinksky might not be held up to the world as a criminal!

The advocate Carson had engaged to defend Bob had a wide experience of criminal cases and of criminals. Yet his experience did not help him to understand his client. Where his experience failed his sympathies enlightened him.

He happened to look at Bob when he was about to close his argument. It was as if a lightning flash had brought into the inky darkness the splendor of its rapid revelation. He knew that which he saw, and knew also that his doubts had been leading him to the truth, else he would not have found it in that instantaneous exchange of glances.

"The prisoner at the bar is a voluntary victim; he is sheltering some one else from sus-

picion." The pause in his speech, the conviction of the truth, was so sudden that it was wonderful the advocate did not say his thought aloud.

The admirable training of his profession helped him through this upsetting of all his previous beliefs and gave him ready control of himself. With a slight cough he turned to the table and waited a few minutes while pouring out and affecting to drink a glass of water.

The pause was long enough. Until now the lawyer had fought for acquittal. But now he must fight to introduce DOUBT into the jury-box. It was his forlorn hope. He would no longer try to attack but to undermine the circumstantial evidence.

It was a long and masterly argument. Case after case was cited to prove how honest witnesses had sworn away lives; how sight and hearing may deceive; and how the most natural and simple action may be put in such a false light that it takes the very complexion and hue of guilt. Every glance at his client as he reviewed the mistakes of the law gave him stronger assurance of his innocence.

Then the advocate threw away quibbles and addressed himself to conscience and to the hu-

manity that is in man. His feelings nerved his zeal as his own reasoning made him understand that the calculating, murderous vengeance of law which arrogates God's right in the life or death of his creatures is a greater crime than the rash deed of blind, unreasoning passion. As he enunciated this truth, which the nineteenth century barbarously denies in every elevation of the gibbet, he watched his client and saw that it struck his intelligence and his heart, but he being guiltless, it did not strike his conscience. Bob believed with him; for Bob was to himself an illustration of one of the law's mistakes. So he listened with a growing and awed understanding of the greater wrong it has done in its usurpation of an awful function which belongs to Omniscience.

The advocate was no longer a mere expounder of human law while he defended a man accused of a crime. He was the champion of eternal truth and of divine mercy. The effect upon the audience was that which truth, feelingly presented, always has. Women wept and men shaded their faces from the inquisitive light as the earnest orator in his closing sentences urged the terrible responsibility of taking a man's life

without more direct proof, and brought to every softened heart the possibility of mistake:

"Not an eye saw the murder. Not a witness can swear that this is the man. I acknowledge that there is around him a curious twisting of misleading circumstances. But in the cases cited you see how false and how fatal was such evidence. Turn from those accusing circumstances to the man himself. Look at the prisoner! You see an honest, frank, soldierly face, furrowed by time, weather-beaten, and marked by many wars; for he has grown old in the service of his country. For over thirty years he was a scout, tried, fearless, true—a soldier, loyal, courageous, and merciful. You have heard his officers and his comrade describe him. General Carson, whose deeds have made you familiar with the name which is written in many a glorious page of his country's history, has testified to the character of the prisoner at the bar. You heard the words: 'I have never known a more faithful or braver soldier, never a bolder or more truthful and honest man. His devotion to the child of an officer who was stolen by the Indians words would but faintly express. When the regiment was forced back by a disastrous fight he followed her into the

heart of the Comanche country, and through his coolness and unflinching resolution she was restored to her friends.' Then his colonel told us the history of the accused as he knew it, and of his behavior in the late war: 'He was a sober, reliable sergeant; if he had been an educated man his promotion would have been sure and rapid. He was obedient to orders and fearless in battle. At Bull Run he saved the regimental colors. At Ball's Bluff, where my horse was shot under me and I was severely wounded, he came to my rescue. He found me a remount, and, swimming by my side, brought me safely across the river.'

"And to reward such a life of service the prosecution asks you to convict this man!

"Strangle him! because he saved your country's flag upon a lost battle-field.

"Hang him! for that daring rescue, for his gallant passage of that bloody and fatal river.

"You have heard his comrade, that crippled missionary to the Indians, himself the bravest of the brave, tell the story of their life on the plains—of 'perilous ventures and of dangers shared,' of mischances by flood and field, and of that most desperate venture of all when the

prisoner, with a few friendly Indians, rode into the Comanche village and saved the life of his friend when he was already burning at the stake. Do you believe a man who dared such odds would stealthily assassinate an unwarned and solitary traveller?

"But the prosecution, to destroy the effect of the character of this man as it has been proved, tells you: 'He was drinking.' If that is true—but it is not—you are asked to hang him because law gave the liquor-dealer a license to poison a man's brain and destroy his consciousness of right and wrong—to prepare him for the commission of a crime for which law afterwards holds him responsible. This may be law, but is it justice?

"If you do this evil thing you are asked to do; if you send this brave, gallant, innocent man to the gallows—for I swear to you I believe him innocent of this murder; if you take it upon your consciences to say he is guilty because he is tied by the threads of accident; if you consent to 'the deep damnation of his taking off,' do you not dread the Nemesis who stalks the steps of the wilful shedder of innocent blood?

"You know that which you do. There is no

excuse, even of drunkenness, for your sentence. You are to be cool, observing, dispassionate. You are to do justice and show mercy, not to give a victim to the Thugs of injustice.

"You are not as gods. You cannot read the past nor can you foretell the future. The real murderer may crouch in this court-room unseen by you. Conscience may finally bring him to a confession which will convict *you* of the death of the innocent, or he may walk scathless in the sunlight for long years after you have dug the grave of the guiltless victim of error. But your doubts will haunt you day after day and night after night.

"Once again I ask you, Look in that face! The prisoner at the bar may, in that unselfish, superb devotion of which we have heard that he is capable, be sheltering a friend by his silence; but I know he is not the murderer.

"Circumstances are the veriest liars, but the soul writes in unmistakable characters upon the faces of men. Can you look upon that face and believe it to be the face of an assassin? It is a face sensitive to praise but fearless of assault. I have watched it closely during this trial, and I have seen that it was as trusting and open, as free

from revenge and murderous intent, as the face of a little child. I beg of you for your own sakes distrust circumstances. What assurance have you that the child you love, the nursling upon your wife's breast, the boy who looks at you with clear, honest eyes, may not be choked by circumstance for the sin committed by another?

"Can you convict this man—who braved danger, and captivity, and torture, and death to save a little child—and feel that your conscience is clear of crime? When you kiss the smiling lips of the little daughter who comes to meet you when this trial is ended, will you not remember the measure of reward you have meted here to a child-saver?

"What news of good or evil will you tell your wife? Will you tell the brave deeds of this soldier to the boy who laughs with joy as he shouts, 'Father'?"

From the first the advocate had the sympathy of the audience. He had touched the hearts of some of the jurors. But there were others in the jury-box, professing Christians, ready to give the lie to the promptings of humanity and the teaching of Christ—men who would rigidly exact a

"tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye," and if they were blinded by their own loss were ready to clutch at the nearest and cry: "This is he that did it."

Another thing against the prisoner was the after summing-up of the prosecution (the last words of which I have already given). It was deadly to the defence, for the merciful scruples of the few were soon talked away. With the ordinary juryman the last speaker has an immense advantage; and law, in thus shutting off the defence, prearranges the conviction of the accused.

The judge was a hanging judge. His charge was short and leaned, as far as a charge decently could, toward conviction. He was anxious for the jury to be instantly agreed. He was in haste to go to his son's wedding.

At four o'clock the jury retired. At five the weak had succumbed.

The verdict was—*Guilty!*

In his indecorous haste the judge was sparing of words. He sentenced the prisoner "to be hanged by the neck until he was dead" on the first Friday in the next month.

CHAPTER XLV.

"Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out, . . . and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. . . . For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, . . . saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of murderers."

IN April, at the time of the burial of the remains found at Carr's Rock, Kate came with Robert Carisbrooke to "The Cedars," where were General Carson, the doctor, and Mrs. Carisbrooke.

The evening after the funeral Mrs. Carisbrooke and Kate went to Philadelphia to see Steenie, who was very ill. The mere mention of their arrival had such an effect upon the sensitive girl, who seemed in the crisis of some strange nervous malady, that the physicians insisted she should not see these visitors; they said it would bring a fresh sense of her loss—a return of the harrowing grief which was caused by the manner of her sister's death. In fact, to avoid all such meetings or memories they advised Steenie's

being taken abroad. Before Mrs. Carisbrooke and Kate left for Cincinnati everything was arranged for Steenie's departure as soon as her health should be re-established. Madame Detontville and "Mammy Sara" were to accompany her.

The gentlemen at "The Cedars" were engaged in daily consultations with the attorneys for "the Cartaret estate."

Unless Hartley relinquished the deed of transfer which Kate had unwittingly signed he would be the absolute owner of Rue's inheritance. This fact, unwelcome to Doctor Carisbrooke and his brother, was gall and wormwood to Carson. Without any apparent reason for his suspicion Carson constantly referred to Hartley as the "author of the accident at Carr's Rock."

The railroad officials were unable to explain the breaking of the rail. Careful examination proved that it was not defective—that the break was recent. It was evident from the angle of deflection and the jagged edges of the twisted splint that it was broken *either just before* or at the moment of the accident. Upon these apparently insignificant facts Carson built his belief, and, as we know, began an investigation,

which was suddenly interrupted by "THE HARTLEY MURDER."

The announcement of this new crime in the New York papers was the first intimation the trustees of "the Cartaret estate" had of Hartley's return from Europe.

The circumstances of the murder, as he understood those circumstances, and the time and place where the body was found, somewhat justified Carson's suspicion. This suspicion grew into an article of belief with both Carson and Robert Carisbrooke when the fact transpired that Hartley had arrived in New York, *via* Liverpool and Montreal, the week before that fatal accident.

But in no way could the proof of Hartley's crime assist the innocent victim the law had condemned. If all Carson's beliefs had been proved upon the trial, court and jury would have regarded them as additional evidence of Bob's guilt. It would but have strengthened the theory of the prosecution as to "revengeful motives."

In fruitless effort for Bob's pardon or a reprieve the days went on until the first Thursday in July—the day before the one appointed for the execution.

Kate was staying at Rosebank.

The doctor came up "the hill" at noon with letters from Carson, who wrote as if he were hopeless of any happy turn in Bob's affairs unless that obstinate, self-selected victim of justice could be persuaded to trust his friends with the secret which it was evident he was keeping.

This was the news which the doctor read to Mrs. Carisbrooke, Kate, and Molly on the shady piazza, but which Molly scarcely heard, so absorbed was she in the large, straggling sentences which covered the many sheets of her own private despatch.

When the doctor had finished his reading he asked: "Molly, does Carson say anything to you of his belief as to who was the murderer of Captain Hartley?"

"Yes, papa." With a glance at Kate she stopped.

Kate. "Your hesitation troubles me, Molly. I trust the truth, whatever it is, may be told me. Truth never hurts as deeply as concealment."

Molly. "I do not doubt your courage or endurance, Cousin Kate, but these surmises of my husband—they are only surmises—might give you needless pain."

Kate. "Any pain which would prove to me that poor Bob is guiltless I would welcome. I have not forgotten how devoted he was to Rue—to all the Leszinkskys. Please tell your news, Molly."

Molly turned the loose leaves rather nervously for so calm and self-poised a character, as she answered: "General Carson thinks that Oscar killed Captain Hartley."

Kate. "Oscar?"

Molly. "Yes, Oscar. Two days before the murder Bob was with my husband in New York. Bob left there to join Oscar, who was waiting for him near the station beyond Carr's Rock. They had never found the O'Dowds, although they had been constantly looking for their place in the search which they were making for Lucy before Rue—died."

The look in Molly's face showed how this allusion, this touch of a grievous wound, hurt, but she steadily continued:

"General Carson is sure Bob met Oscar after he left the inn; Bob must have told Oscar that Captain Hartley was there on his way to the O'Dowd's. My husband says: 'Oscar is a fatalist, and years ago he declared to me that if the

Lord ever delivered Captain Hartley into his hands he would kill him!'"

Kate. "What wrong had Captain Hartley done him?"

Molly. "I do not know, Cousin Kate, if you ever heard that Lucy was Oscar's wife."

Kate. "No, I never knew—" She stopped abruptly.

There was a short silence. In a glance of appeal Molly begged her father to tell the story; a negative gesture compelled her to continue:

"My husband says further: 'Oscar always believed a time of payment—a time when revenge should be a duty—would come, and the debt has steadily increased.' Oscar knew of Lucy's later wrong when she was separated from her child and sold as a slave."

The change in Kate's face, its deadly pallor, hushed Molly's reluctant words, until Kate asked:

"Go on, please, Molly. I must hear all. No one can shield me from this sorrow or help me bear it. Even here in this world 'our sins find us out.'"

As she was speaking Kate's hands were held out in entreaty. She knew she would be struck,

be punished, by the words which were coming; but they could not wound her more severely than did the thought of her share in the sin which was bearing such bitter fruit.

Kate's appeal forced a continuation of Molly's readings from Carson's letter and of Molly's explanation of the text: "Oscar's devotion to his master and to his master's child was absolute; so there were later and almost stronger reasons for his hate than his own wrongs or Lucy's." Molly turned the pages to make them tell the story. "My husband says further 'that although there is no tangible proof which the law would accept or admit as evidence,' he believes and Bob and Oscar believe that, either personally or by procurement, Captain Hartley caused the accident at Carr's Rock."

"For what reason?" cried Kate. The pleading hands were held above a bowed head. The meek expression of surrender and acceptance of the inevitable which was expressed in Kate's attitude touched Molly so deeply that speech failed her. Again the whispered question came:

"For what reason—for what reason? O Dr. Carisbrooke! will *you* not tell me?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "Remember it is not proved.

It only seems proved to those whose prejudices may blind their judgment."

Kate. "O Dr. Carisbrooke! what reason could there be? Why does General Carson think this?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "Past crimes point to a new one when there is motive for crime. Rue dead, Captain Hartley would succeed to the inheritance he secured in your deed of transfer."

Kate was on her feet, staggering under this last blow like some one suddenly struck blind. They all gathered about her. Sure of being understood by the young mother, she threw her arms around Molly, gasping brokenly: "O my baby! my baby! He was your father!"

A servant came hastily to the steps of the piazza: "Doctor, a woman is lying dead under a tree in the orchard near the cottage."

At Mrs. Carisbrooke's quick cry, "It is Lucy! I know it is Lucy!" Kate glided from Molly's encircling arms and was gone. They quickly followed the lead of the slender feet which were running in the way of repentance and of mercy. When the Carisbrookes reached the cottage Kate was sitting under the tree that shaded the door-step, holding in her arms the shrunken, wasted form of the death-stricken woman.

She was not dead, but she was dying, this poor, storm-tossed Hagar.

The pallid face was resting upon Kate's breast. There was a half-frightened yet strange look of happiness in the beautiful brown eyes which were watching the tears that gathered and fell from the long, dark lashes of the starry eyes which shone with tender light upon her.

Dr. Carisbrooke took the little, withered hand and counted the pulse-beats. Then he gave low-spoken directions to his wife and Molly, and soon the cottage was open and ready for the tenant who was to make but short stay there before she started on her last lonely journey.

While the hurried preparation at the cottage was being made the doctor went to his office for needed restoratives.

During the brief space of his absence Kate was alone with Lucy. Only Lucy heard Kate's confession of wrong and her prayer for forgiveness. The words spoken were few and simple, but they were levers that lifted a heavy weight from two suffering souls. When all was ready Kate carried Lucy into the cottage; then, kissing the pale lips of the fainting "Hagar," she was gone. All that long, hot afternoon the doctor was busy

with the patient, whose strength was going in constant effort at speech. At last he caught the meaning of the broken sentences, and his questions were answered in intelligible but monosyllabic replies. Giving Lucy a stimulant to sustain her during the fast-going hours, which must now be hoarded to save the innocent, the doctor sent in haste for Horry, who lived near by, for a magistrate, and for Grandison.

Lucy was so near death that the questioning was brief; but it was evident to all the assistants that she had a perfectly clear and sane recollection of the events which had occurred since she left Rosebank in February; she had a rational memory of her delusions, while thoroughly recognizing them as the delusions of her insane moments. It was as if one were telling the feverish dreams which had filled the hours of a broken and troubled sleep.

This is the history of her wanderings, as developed in the questions and answers of that dying declaration:

When Lucy left Rosebank she had gone to the O'Dowds'. The change and the journey quieted her and brought her out of the mist of her distempered fancies. There was trouble and illness

at the O'Dowds', and in care for the sick Lucy forgot herself. Two of Mary O'Dowd's children were ill with the small-pox in Philadelphia at the house of a married sister. The youngest son had come to the cabin in the hills for his mother. He was taken with small-pox the night of his arrival. Before he recovered his mother caught the infection. The boy was soon well and had gone back to Philadelphia, and his mother, who was recovering rapidly, was to leave Lucy to care for the house while she visited her children. The night before Mary O'Dowd's departure Lucy heard some one moaning at the door. Worn out with the long nursing and frightened with the sudden awakening, a new delusion took possession of Lucy. She thought she heard Mai's voice calling in the distance, "Mother! mother!" When she opened the door a woman was lying on the steps.

What followed I will give in the words in which Dr. Carisbrooke told the story to his wife:

"Lucy is perfectly sane. It is the final quickening of the intelligence which nearly always precedes the death of a person who has been partially insane. I tell you this to prepare you for a startling revelation. The woman on the door-

steps—" His wife interrupted: "O Carisbrooke, it was Rue! Rue is living—Rue! I see the answer in your eyes."

"Virginia, I am half afraid of your sanity. Your reconstruction of dead ancestors and your gift of prophecy, your divination of mysteries, is likely to twist your remarkably fine understanding into a fatal snarl."

"But it was Rue, Carisbrooke?"

"Yes, it was Rue."

"Where is she now, Carisbrooke? Not at the O'Dowds', or they would have found her at the time Hartley was murdered. Carson would surely have found her. Where is she?"

"Just there, Virginia, is the puzzle. Here is something Lucy gave me. It is a visible proof of Rue's existence, for Lucy took it from Rue when she undressed her."

He put in his wife's hand a brooch of chased gold. It was one they both knew. Mrs. Carisbrooke touched a spring. Looking upon the painted miniature of Stanislaus Leszinksky, she said:

"Cannot Lucy tell where Rue is?"

"No. Lucy's delusion was that *Mai brought Rue to the cabin to save her from a threatening*

danger. Either something she had heard or else a clairvoyant sense of Hartley's purpose pointed out the one to be feared.

"Rue was in a state of half-consciousness. Lucy says she had a cut on the temple and another on the back of her head. There must have been some injury—probably concussion of the brain.

"Mary O'Dowd had gone to Philadelphia without knowing who was the stranger that Lucy had taken in. Rue had been three weeks at the cabin in a half-dazed, semi-conscious condition, when one night she became feverish and restless. I think it possible she was taking the small-pox. At daylight she grew more composed and quiet. Lucy had gone to an inner room; she had not been long asleep when she was aroused by the sound of the opening of the outer door. She got up instantly. She said she could not understand what prompted her, but that as she passed the table she caught up a pistol she had taken from Rue's pocket. When she pushed back the door leading to Rue's room she saw Hartley standing by the bed, looking at the sleeping girl. She says the look in his face made her kill him."

"Lucy killed him!"

"Yes, she shot him—killed him with the pistol Stanislaus Leszinksky gave Margaret before Rue was born. Rue always carried it. It was found on Bob when he was arrested; it was a strong point in the evidence."

"But Bob—where did he get it? O Carisbrooke! what a murderous look must have been in that man's face when so gentle a creature as Lucy—I cannot yet believe Lucy killed him!"

"She says when he fell—you know it was proved that he must have been killed instantly—she threw the pistol at him and fled. When she turned toward the wood she looked back and two men were running up the steps."

"Bob and Oscar?"

"Yes, Lucy was sure it was Oscar."

"But Rue—where is Rue?"

"Where Oscar and Bob must have taken her. Evidently Bob thought that Rue killed Hartley. This confession of Lucy's will save Bob. Horry and Grandison have gone to telegraph Carson, the governor, and Bob's counsel. The magistrate's notes will be sent on by mail. Bob will be saved. But I must start in the morning, Virginia; Rue may be ill. I am troubled about Rue."

"May I go with you, Carisbrooke?"

"I wish you could. But Molly? We cannot both leave Molly alone with all the care Lucy's death will bring. Besides, there is Kate."

"Kate will insist upon going with you. Nothing could keep her from Rue. I must go at once and tell Kate."

Mrs. Carisbrooke failed to find Kate; but coming from her room, she met Molly and her father. Molly's tearful face said that Lucy was dead before the words were spoken. Mrs. Carisbrooke asked:

"At the very last did she speak of Mai?"

"No, mamma. When papa let me go to her she knew me, but she did not speak. I took her hand and she held me close—close! She was so still I thought she was sleeping. Suddenly she threw up her hands and called, 'Oscar!'—only once, and it was over. It was her last breath, her last cry." Doctor Carisbrooke said softly: "It was the cry of conscience. The ties of the flesh are not so strong as the law of the spirit. Affection may die, but conscience is immortal."

After leaving the cottage Kate went to her room. But a longing she could not resist mas-

tered her. She left the house, and once again she walked through the shady lane into the wood-path under the trees where she had first walked with Leszinksky. She heard these words echo out of the past:

"The lane is cool and shady; will you come?"

There was a ghostly rhythm of steps in the leafy path, and the distant sound of a shot hard-followed by the cry of a wounded bird.

"See how it bleeds! poor little thing. Will it die?"

"It is dying now."

Question and answer came out of the far-away years! There were other words:

"But now you are sorry. To-day, when you found what injustice Lucy had suffered, you forgave her for pity's sake."

Kate leaned on the gnarled roots of the tree where the robin was buried, repeating unconsciously the words, "for pity's sake."

The westering sun sent waves of light beneath the branches. Her own shadow fell across the path where Leszinksky had stood. The shadow seemed the ghost of the past. To that past she cried:

"For pity's sake Lucy has forgiven me. It

was I who was in the wrong. She was the victim of caste, of sex, of the world's unjust division of responsibility. Through love she was obedient to evil. Man did not pity her; *he* dragged her into a sin which has limitless consequences! But God pitied her. He gave her a child and touched her with the divine spirit of motherhood, which has cleansed her of sin; while I—O my Father! thou hast dealt justly with me. Thou hast taken into thy care the child which was lying on my heart when I was hard and cruel to a suffering mother. I would not forgive her when pride, not love, was wounded; but 'for pity's sake' she has forgiven me."

In the cool, dewy twilight a sad woman walked alone under overarching trees. The silence was unbroken. The regular rhythm of steps that fell together was lost for ever from the leafy lane.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet:
How dismal 'tis to see
The great, tall, spectral skeleton,
The ladder, and the tree!

"He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee
And veiled his face, for Christ's dear grace,
Beneath the gallows-tree.

"There was another heavy sound,
A hush, and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!"

SENTENCED by a hanging judge! Bob's friends made vain appeal to a hanging governor. The answer was ready:

"The majesty of the law must be respected." An offering of blood must be poured upon the altar of justice. The sculptor "builded better than he knew" when he bandaged the eyes of the statue he brought out of stone.

Night and day, during that month between the day of sentence and the day appointed for its execution, Carson and the counsel for the defence

wearied the authorities with their continual coming. Three of the jurymen signed the petition for the commutation of sentence. The prosecuting attorney promised to sign it if they could get the signature of the judge. The judge was deaf to the plea for mercy!

The governor's reason for refusal, as given to Carson, was the stale but plausible answer which has fed the gallows for centuries: "He could not conscientiously interfere with the course of justice." The unspoken reason was, public sentiment called for the execution of the criminal, and his excellency could not go against public sentiment, for the fall elections were near at hand.

As Pilate listened to the cry, "Release unto us Barabbas," so the governor pardoned the corrupt leader of a corrupt "ring" which had plundered the public treasury for years, while he washed his hands of the blood of the soldier who had followed his country's flag through the fiery storm of a hundred battles.

Night and day during this waiting time Pike was Bob's support and stay. The "crippled preacher to the Indians" had won the hearts of the little community of the county town. He

had found a home near the jail, and the keeper of the jail, who was a humane and kindly man, gave him free access to his old comrade.

When the jail doors opened in the morning Pike was always there waiting admittance. The turnkey and the prisoners in the cells could hear the simple, cordial salutation, always the same, always direct from the heart.

"How-dy, Bob? Our Father's brung us safe to the light of another mornin', my frien'. He'll bring us safe up yonder to the Great Light at las'. Let's beg his marcy in the words he's l'arnt us."

Then the jailer at the door and the listening prisoners could hear that sublimely simple prayer Jesus of Nazareth taught his disciples.

From the first day of Pike's coming until the last, when the voice of a strong man in agony for his friend who was about to die reached them, not a sound of mockery, not a ribald word ever disturbed the Christian who was about the work his Master had set him to do. The missionary of the woods unconsciously carried the message of his Father and theirs to the criminals in the jail.

During the hours when Bob left his cell for a

walk in the jail-yard Pike was with him. The crutches wore little paths across the stones.

During these walks Bob resumed his old habit of monologue. He would talk of everything in the past except of what had occurred in those two days between the time of his leaving New York and the time of his arrest. No question or entreaty of Pike or of General Carson brought any answer except the self-criminating one:

"How or whar that man died don't make nó differ'nce. Whosomedever put him outen this world did the folks lef' in it a sarvice. He desarved more'n he got. If I could b'lieve in hell I'd tell you for sho' he's a citizen of that climate. Anyhow, he's dead and I ain't sorry."

Oscar's absence when Carson expected him to come with news of Lucy sometimes made Carson think that Oscar had committed the murder, and that Bob was waiting for Oscar to have a safe start in the race with Justice. A discreet question, and a hint that he "thought Oscar had been gone long enough to get to the Seminole settlement in Mexico, where he was sure to find friends and shelter," brought an unexpected answer:

"I can't tell you, general, that I didn't kill Captain Hartley, and I won't, but I'm free to say

Oscar had no hand in it. He didn't even see it done. If Oscar ever gets in trouble 'bout this I'll thank you kindly, sir, if you'll say my las' words cl'ared him. I know you'll see him outen it, fur you're a-tryin' your best to help me, and I can't and won't say I didn't do it."

Then the advocate, sure of his theory of Bob's sacrifice of himself, came. It was after they had failed to persuade the governor to commute the sentence. At his request he saw Bob alone. He came straight to the point:

"You did not kill Captain Hartley. I am sure you did not kill him, but you are willing to die in the place of the person who did."

Unhappily, the last sentence confirmed Bob in his belief that his death would insure Rue's safety by putting her out of the law's reach. Convinced of that, he did not listen understandingly to the words which followed.

The advocate waited for an answer, but Bob took refuge in silence. It was his only possible defence against the trained intelligence which he feared would force him into betrayal of the truth.

"If you would trust me I could save you. The governor asked me if I would pledge my honor that from what you have told me as your

counsel I was sure of your innocence. I could not, for you have told me nothing. I beg of you to tell me now. Your secret will be safe with me, but then I can give the governor my word and he will grant a reprieve. Time is what we want, for time unravels all mysteries."

Again the last sentence was fatal. Bob's most intense wish now was that the end should come. He counted the few days left and was sorry there was almost a week to wait. There was no consolation to him but a terrible threat in the words, "Time unravels all mysteries." Why did they not leave him in peace? was his thought; why were General Carson and Pike helping to snare him into a confession that would put the child of the friends they had all loved so dearly in his place?

The advocate left the condemned man to his obstinate silence. But the experienced lawyer was but the more firmly convinced that Bob was not the murderer.

The evening before the day appointed for the execution Bob and Pike were left alone together. The conversation of the two friends was unrestrained, and Pike made a last appeal for his friend's confidence.

"Thar ain't no use, Pike, of askin' me. I can't tell and I won't. You know thar's a mighty strong reason fur what I'm a-doin'. I ain't noways 'feard o' dyin'. I ain't never shirked no place whar I was a-riskin' it. But I'm free to say hangin' goes agin' the grain. If 'twas a rifle-ball comin' straight through my heart in the mornin' I'd take it and say, Thankee. I could look down the bar'l and see the way a soldier mought die. You know I wouldn't flinch. And I ain't a-goin' to flinch anyway; but it's a dog's death, Pike—yes, it's a dog's death! Stranglin' a man and a-hangin' him up for a sign of what human natur' can do fur a brother!—a-showin' God-a-Mighty that a jury-box and a judge's bench is high 'nough fur men to stand on and reach up and take His pass-keys fur to send his critters into Kingdom-come 'thout any leave o' his'n."

"But can't you furgiv' 'em, Bob? Jesus Christ furgiv' 'em when he was a-hangin' on the tree fur no sin, but o'ny to save sinners."

"Well, ain't I a-savin'—" Bob had commenced with an impetuous outburst, then he suddenly stopped. Pike caught his friend and hugged him close to his heart.

"Bob," he said softly—"Bob, my frien', you didn't kill that man, Bob. I sees the truth at las'! I has been sore afeard fur you, Bob. I has wrastled with God's angel fur this, like Jacob of old. Night and day, Bob, night and day I has begged the blessin' from' our Father, and now I got it. You didn't kill him, Bob!—no, my frien', you *didn't* kill him! Bob, Bob! our Father in heaven 'is a very present help in time o' trouble.'"

Pike dropped his head on Bob's shoulder and wept like a child.

The jailer came to tell Pike it was time for him to go. As he entered he heard the voice of prayer. Softly closing the door, he went away. He could not find it in his heart to banish the friend and minister of the man who was so soon to die.

All night Pike was left with his friend. Part of the time Bob slept. Pike unwearily kept his vigil of prayer for his friend's salvation. The bitterness of his own grief had been lost in the knowledge of Bob's innocence of the crime for which he was to suffer. There was something of the triumphant and thanksgiving strain of the Psalmist in the simple words with which Pike

confessed his joy at this final goodness of his Heavenly Father. He could now see his friend die, feeling assured that the Judge Eternal would consider his guiltless suffering and receive his soul in loving kindness and mercy.

At daylight Bob awakened to see Pike quietly sitting beside him, looking at him with an expression of solemn joy in his clear, childlike eyes of heavenly blue.

"Pike," said Bob, taking his friend's hand, "thar's somethin' I want you to do—o'ny you must promise me you won't tell it to nobody, not the general or nobody. You'll jus' do it, first, bekase I asks it of you; and then—well, you'll know arfter you promise."

"Yes, Bob; you can trus' me, Bob. I'll do what you wants, my frien', jus' as you tells me to do, Bob."

"Pike, you know that depot thar by the railroad at —— thar?"

"Yes, Bob; the general and me come by thar when he brought me here."

"Did you look at the hills 'bout thar, Pike?"

"No, Bob, I can't say I did."

"Well, anyway, you'll find the place. You ain't cl'ar furgot our trail-marks?"

"No, Bob. Tell me what natur' looks like in rocks, and hills, and trees, and I'll find any place you wants me to go."

"Well, go over to the railroad thar by yourself, Pike. Don't tell anybody; don't take nobody."

"No, Bob; I won't."

"Stan' over on the side of the depot away from the river, with your back agin the door thar, and over a little to your right above the ridge you'll see a high hill which looks like that bald knob with the Osage beacon on it over on the Kiameshia."

"Yes, Bob. I 'member that knob; I'll know one like it."

"Git your barrin's fixed and then go 'round the ridge to the left. You'll have a long walk, Pike, but I know you'll try it. It's hard to ask o' you, Pike, to go thar on crutches, but I must; thar ain't nobody but you I dar' trus'."

"I'll do it, Bob. Don't be oneasy, my frien'. I'll go an' I'll find it."

"Arfter you go 'round that road and cross the ridge you mustn't go down offen the ridge, but turn up a sort o' cow-path to the right along the ridge till you see the p'int o' the knob. By that

time you'll see a big rock up thar, and three little hemlocks agin it."

"Yes, Bob; up the ridge to the right till I see the rock and the three hemlocks on the knob."

"Then, Pike, you must stop."

"Stop, Bob?"

"Yes; stop and take off your hat, and wave it 'roun' your head so." Bob raised up and made the salute.

"Yes, Bob; it's a sign, may be?"

"It's a sign. Walk on till you come to a big flat rock in a straight line with the knob—thar's laurel bushes all 'roun' it—then wave your hat agin'."

"Yes, Bob."

"Then most-like somebody will wave from the rock on the knob; if they do you wait till they come down whar you are."

"And if they don't, Bob?"

"Then you mus' wait thar, 'cause you can't climb that hill; and every hour while daylight lasts wave agin. If by that time you ain't seen nobody you must go agin four weeks from to-day. It's kind o' quar, but it war fixed in the start fur a Friday."

"Mus' I go to-day, Bob?"

"Yes, to-day. I know you won't leave me till—till it's done; but then, Pike, arfter I'm gone you ain't got no time to waste bein' sorry."

"No, Bob; I'll leave that up thar with our Father and go. You can trus' me."

"Then, Pike, you mus' tell what's become o' me."

"To the man I find thar?"

"Yes, to him; and tell him I said he can tell you who's up in the hills."

"Will he know me, Bob, and believe you sent me when I ask, 'Who's up in the hills'?"

"Yes, he'll know. Then, if all's safe in the hills, you get General Carson and go with the man."

"Mus' I ask General Carson to wait here, Bob, till I sees the man?"

"Yes; when I'm—when I'm gone you may tell him to wait. Ar' you sho' you'll know, Pike, jus' whar to go?" Pike repeated the directions. After that he prayed; then the jailer came.

At the moment Bob was giving Pike these directions Oscar was waiting on the hill. He had been there twice before—on days appointed by Bob if anything should keep him from coming to

the place of refuge to which Oscar had taken Rue.

From the dawning of day Oscar had vigilantly watched valley and ridge. About seven o'clock he saw a light buggy rapidly driven to the station. There was an instant stir and movement about the station. A man ran across a field and returned hurriedly with another. Then a gentleman got out of the buggy and they all went into the station.

"That looked mighty like Marse Carson."

Oscar wiped the glasses and watched closely. He had seen the people about the station so often he knew who belonged there. The train was coming from New York and General Carson came out of the door. Oscar could now see distinctly that it was General Carson. No one got off the train. Oscar saw that, for Oscar was hoping General Carson was waiting for Bob. The train moved on and Carson walked up and down before the door. Oscar knew him so well he could tell how impatient and nervous the walker was. He would look at the sun and his watch, stopping occasionally at the door as if to question some one.

"I wonder," thought Oscar, "if he's a-waitin'

fur Marse Bob? I'm mighty troubled 'bout Marse Bob. He told me not to go 'way from here, not to go lookin' fur him, if he didn't come; but it's quar Marse Carson's thar waitin', too. I mus' see Marse Carson."

As if to make his decision irrevocable Oscar walked rapidly down the hill. Then he ran down the slope of the ridge and around to the station. He touched Carson before Carson knew him.

"Why, Oscar!"

Amazement and fear of some new trouble held Carson as he looked at the thin, gaunt, raggedly-clad figure and the careworn, anxious face of the negro.

"Mornin', Marse Carson; how-dy, sir? I's been mighty troubled and oneasy 'bout Marse Bob, sir. I was up thar on the hill thar"—pointing—"whar he told me to wait to-day fur him. I've been thar twice befo', like he said, but he didn't come; and this mornin', when I seed you here, sir, I had to come to ask you, sir, if you know whar he is."

Carson was puzzled. News had come that morning which made him hopeful of Bob's immediate reprieve; but to hear who had killed

Hartley would be a startling blow to Oscar. Dr. Carisbrooke had telegraphed. That morning he had received a despatch sent the night before. Carson knew the lawyer who had defended Bob had been telegraphed and was now in communication with the governor, who had also been telegraphed from Cincinnati that the person who committed the murder was there, and had in confessing the crime completely exonerated Bob.

Oscar's sudden appearance and his ignorance of Bob's danger upset the theory Carson had built upon the telegrams he had received. In the fewest words he told Oscar of Bob's trial, conviction, and danger of execution if a reprieve was not telegraphed in time to take it to the county town before noon.

The sentence must be executed at twelve o'clock. That was the last minute the sheriff could wait; he had promised to wait until then. At first Oscar could not understand—could not realize Bob's danger. Carson plainly restated the brutal truth. Oscar fell at his feet and caught Carson's knees, crying between choking sobs:

"He didn't do it, Marse Carson. He didn't do it! I know he didn't. O Lord o' vengeance!

you know he didn't do it. *I* wanted to do it, but Marse Bob wouldn't let me. I can't tell you all, Marse Carson; I can't tell you, but 'fore God he didn't do it, sir—'fore God he didn't!"

"Yes, I know he did not." Then Carson stopped; he could not give the suffering, loving nature another and probably a harder blow. Oscar was so crushed by grief that he asked no questions. He had got one thought fixed in heart and brain. He knew if a reprieve did not come in time Bob must die. The negro crouched upon the ground, his hands clenched behind his head; he was looking up with staring, bloodshot eyes at the sun and the wires of the telegraph line, as if they must speak. But the sun rolled on his way and there was no message.

Ten o'clock! Eleven o'clock! The lazy cattle were lying under the shade in the meadow. A solitary bird was singing in the wood close by. There was a busy insect hum under every blade of grass where Oscar was lying. The bird's carol and the steady humming seemed to beat in his brain.

The index pointed at the half hour. Click! click! a little metallic cry inside the window, and Carson uttered a hurried exclamation.

Oscar was on his feet, but he tremblingly staggered to the door.

"Is it come, Marse Carson? is it come?"

"The reprieve? Yes, Oscar, yes!"

Oh! what a joyful cry to Oscar was that "yes."

"Come, Oscar; you shall drive me back. We have the fastest horse in the county. You shall save Bob, Oscar. Come!"

The negro no longer trembled; the relaxed nerves and muscles were restrung. Only the pulses were throbbing with the new strength that appeal had called into life.

They had started.

"How fur is it, Marse Carson?"

The distance was told. The negro knew it was a bare possibility to win in the race, but his strength, experience, and training all aided.

Nowhere could Carson have found a better driver. Carefully, steadily, without fretting or worrying him, the horse was kept at his best. Not the smallest obstruction missed the driver's eye; never did the firm hand fail. There were no words except an occasional telling from Carson of time and the distance yet to make. The

white spire of the village church gleamed in the sunshine.

There was a rough little bridge over a gully. Oscar's hand was like iron in its steady hold; but the horse stumbled, and then, recovering, went on. Slower—still slower. Whip and voice urged him into broken spurts.

Carson looked at Oscar. The negro's face was ashen with its wild look of fright.

"What is it, Oscar?"

"He can't do it, Marse Carson, but I mus'. You know how I used to run. I'll do it now, sir. Drive him a minute at his best, sir, while I gits ready."

The jacket, shoes, and heavy flannel shirt were thrown away. With his knife he cut his breeches short to the knees. His suspenders were slipped from his shoulders and strapped about his waist.

"Now I'm ready, Marse Carson. Giv' me the paper, sir, then stop him a minute. Whar mus' I go with it?"

"Straight to the jail, over to the right of the church-spire you see. Keep straight ahead till you pass the church, then the first turn to the right. You will see a crowd, I think. They will

all tell you where to go. Cry out, 'A pardon!' Yes, say it is a pardon. Run, Oscar, run; it's Bob's last chance!"

Carson reined up a moment and Oscar was in the road. Then he stood up and shouted a cheer to the runner. Before he again whipped the lame horse into a broken gallop Oscar had turned a curve and was out of sight.

With his head erect and his arms close up the negro sprang forward in his race with death. As he reached the outskirts of the village the court-house clock sounded its slow pulsation of time. Each stroke was a lash to the runner. People saw him coming and shouted. They knew no man could run like that unless it was to save life. They moved out of the way to let him pass, and then followed fast in his steps. The crowd at the jail saw him and a cry went up:

"Cut him down! A reprieve! Cut him down!"

Oscar was deaf to all sound, except the tumult which was beating in his brain and the whirling of mighty winds which seemed to ring in his ears. He knew he had been told to cry aloud. But with the first effort at speech there was only

a hoarse moan, and then a shriller cry—such a cry as the mountain pine sends to its fellows when the storm is pulling its roots from their place of vantage. At last his voice came and framed words:

"A pardon! a pardon! You's free, Marse Bob! you's free!"

Right and left they parted to let him through. He saw the scaffold and men crowding about it.

Only a piece of rope was hanging from the ghastly gibbet.

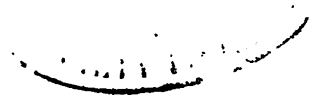
"A pardon! You's free, Marse Bob! Oscar's here, Marse Bob! You's free—free! *O Lord o' vengeance!* WHAT!"

He stumbled blindly forward; the blood gushed in a bright red torrent from his mouth. As some one took the paper from the outstretched hand he fell at the foot of the gallows—across the lifeless body of the man they had cut down as the people shouted, "A reprieve!"

Two of the faithfullest hearts that have beat in the century were still. The awe-struck crowd parted to let the crippled preacher reach the dead. Pike knelt beside the man law had murdered and the man God had in very truth "set free." The scarred face of the cripple was lifted

heavenward, but the pale, quivering lips were dumb. The heart of the child-like Christian was crushed by the crime of the nineteenth century. The burning sun seemed an angry flame which threatened the earth. The shadow of the gibbet hid from him the face of the Father.

A caged bird in the jail-window began singing in low, broken runs, and then thrilled the hot, slumbrous air with a burst of melody. The crowd stirred uneasily; the dumb lips were unclosed: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."



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